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U.S. Dept. of State Office of Strategic Services
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JAPANESE ADMINISTRATION
OF BURMA

A study of Japanese-Burmese relations from before occupation to the middle of 1944; shifts in Japan's administrative procedure; difficulties encountered by the Provisional government; the effect of Japan's pledge of independence for Burma; the mobilization of Burma for war.

10 JULY 1944

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JAPANESE ADMINISTRATION OF BURMA

SUMMARY

The Japanese have pursued a policy in Burma which has combined direct military control with indirect administration through the agencies of a Burma Government which they themselves sponsored. Their program has been imaginatively planned and boldly executed. Starting with relatively little positive local cooperation they have enlisted the aid of important elements of Burman society by convincing them that Burma has a stake in Japan's victory. Burmese initiative has been allowed generous expression in governmental, economic, and social activities.

This study (1) traces the development of Japan's administrative program (2) analyzes the salient aspects of Japanese military control, (3) outlines the major governmental and economic problems which confront the civilian Burmese administration, and (4) evaluates Burma's contribution to Japan's military effort.

THEORY OF THE EARTH

CHAPTER I

The Earth is a sphere, and its surface is covered by water. The land is divided into continents and islands. The continents are the large masses of land, and the islands are the small pieces of land. The land is also divided into countries and states. The countries are the large political divisions, and the states are the smaller political divisions. The land is also divided into cities and towns. The cities are the large urban areas, and the towns are the smaller urban areas. The land is also divided into villages and hamlets. The villages are the small rural areas, and the hamlets are the very small rural areas. The land is also divided into fields and farms. The fields are the areas of land used for agriculture, and the farms are the areas of land used for raising livestock. The land is also divided into forests and woods. The forests are the areas of land covered by trees, and the woods are the areas of land covered by smaller trees and shrubs. The land is also divided into mountains and hills. The mountains are the high, rugged areas of land, and the hills are the lower, rounded areas of land. The land is also divided into rivers and streams. The rivers are the large bodies of water that flow in a single direction, and the streams are the smaller bodies of water that flow in a single direction. The land is also divided into lakes and ponds. The lakes are the large bodies of water that are surrounded by land, and the ponds are the smaller bodies of water that are surrounded by land. The land is also divided into bays and harbors. The bays are the large bodies of water that are partially enclosed by land, and the harbors are the smaller bodies of water that are partially enclosed by land. The land is also divided into gulfs and straits. The gulfs are the large bodies of water that are partially enclosed by land, and the straits are the smaller bodies of water that are partially enclosed by land. The land is also divided into canals and ditches. The canals are the artificial bodies of water that are built for navigation, and the ditches are the artificial bodies of water that are built for irrigation. The land is also divided into roads and highways. The roads are the paths that are built for travel, and the highways are the larger paths that are built for travel. The land is also divided into bridges and tunnels. The bridges are the structures that span over a body of water or a deep ravine, and the tunnels are the structures that pass through a mountain or a hill. The land is also divided into ports and harbors. The ports are the areas of land where ships can dock, and the harbors are the areas of land where ships can anchor. The land is also divided into cities and towns. The cities are the large urban areas, and the towns are the smaller urban areas. The land is also divided into villages and hamlets. The villages are the small rural areas, and the hamlets are the very small rural areas. The land is also divided into fields and farms. The fields are the areas of land used for agriculture, and the farms are the areas of land used for raising livestock. The land is also divided into forests and woods. The forests are the areas of land covered by trees, and the woods are the areas of land covered by smaller trees and shrubs. The land is also divided into mountains and hills. The mountains are the high, rugged areas of land, and the hills are the lower, rounded areas of land. The land is also divided into rivers and streams. The rivers are the large bodies of water that flow in a single direction, and the streams are the smaller bodies of water that flow in a single direction. The land is also divided into lakes and ponds. The lakes are the large bodies of water that are surrounded by land, and the ponds are the smaller bodies of water that are surrounded by land. The land is also divided into bays and harbors. The bays are the large bodies of water that are partially enclosed by land, and the harbors are the smaller bodies of water that are partially enclosed by land. The land is also divided into gulfs and straits. The gulfs are the large bodies of water that are partially enclosed by land, and the straits are the smaller bodies of water that are partially enclosed by land. The land is also divided into canals and ditches. The canals are the artificial bodies of water that are built for navigation, and the ditches are the artificial bodies of water that are built for irrigation. The land is also divided into roads and highways. The roads are the paths that are built for travel, and the highways are the larger paths that are built for travel. The land is also divided into bridges and tunnels. The bridges are the structures that span over a body of water or a deep ravine, and the tunnels are the structures that pass through a mountain or a hill.

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I. HOW THE JAPANESE OBTAINED CONTROL OF BURMA

A. NEWSPAPER PROPAGANDA

As early as 1937 paid Japanese propaganda, attacking both the British and the Chinese, appeared in the Burmese vernacular press. It reached its climax with the opening of the Burma Road in 1939, but was countered thereafter by the influence of Chinese advertising judiciously distributed, and by the exchange of several goodwill missions between China and Burma. The net results of Japanese propagandist efforts before 1941 were not very significant; nor were the 800 Japanese residents of Burma locally influential. A nationalist paper in Mandalay even suggested that, once independent, Burma should form an alliance with China, Siam, and Indochina—"a powerful combination which will fear no foe."

B. JAPAN'S CHOICE OF BURMESE COLLABORATORS

A virulent quarrel developed in the fall of 1939 between Burmese political leaders and the British Governor. The immediate occasion, by way of reply to a request of the moderate-minded Premier, was the Governor's resurrection of a 1931 statement of the Secretary of State for India that Burma would not be overlooked if new reforms for India were contemplated. The statement affirmed Britain's continuing purpose to develop responsible government in separated Burma as an integral part of the Empire but with the clear connotation that London alone would determine the character and the occasion of specific measures quite independently from what might happen in India. This statement had been the *cause célèbre* of the rabid anti-separationist furor of the early thirties. Its reiteration opened old wounds and afforded Japan an excellent opportunity to select a cooperating group.

Opposition to the British focused in two political groups. The first was the so-called "Freedom Bloc" founded earlier in 1939 by ex-Premier Ba Maw. It included certain leaders of the revolutionary *Dobama* (Burma) party, Thakin Mya, Thakin Aung San, and Thakin Nu, as well as Ba Maw and his Sinyetha group, U Hla Min, Bandoola U Sein, Dr. Thein Maung, and U Tun Aung. All of these men later filled high posts in the Japanese-sponsored regime. The "Freedom Bloc" in 1939 demanded immediate and unconditional independence for Burma, rejecting in advance any constitution drafted in England. In January 1940, Dr. Thein Maung returned from a "pleasure" trip to Japan. He was met at the dock by Ba Maw accompanied by the Japanese consul and other Japanese residents of Rangoon. Ba Maw's personal motives in making extreme political demands were open to question. His political game of soliciting non-Burmese votes in the House of Representatives to hold himself in power had played out earlier in the year. He was now outflanking his nationalist critics by assuming an uncompromisingly revolutionary stand. In 1940 he resigned his seat in the legislature and was eventually placed in jail for deliberately seditious utterances. The majority of Thakins, on the other hand, including many young socialistically-inclined ex-university students, enjoyed a reputation for sincerity unmatched by any other anti-British political group in Burma. The "Freedom Bloc" itself was not a distinct political party but rather a group upholding the banner of Burman political and economic independence.

The second focal point of opposition to the Governor was the *Myochit* (patriotic) party of U Saw, then Minister of Agriculture and Forests. U Saw had visited Japan in

1938, and his paper, *The Sun*, was openly friendly to the Japanese. U Saw's followers definitely sought political power and courted the support of the unprogressive "Young Pongyi Association" which could influence local sentiment and deliver the needed votes. *The Sun* offered to accept the genuineness of Britain's declared war aims if London would promise Burma Dominion status immediately after the war. Before the end of 1939 U Saw took over the premiership, and eventually his Government provoked such a complete deadlock that the Governor felt obliged to rule by the emergency powers afforded him in the constitution. In 1941 U Saw journeyed to London and Washington in an abortive attempt to secure a commitment on Dominion status for Burma. He was arrested by British authorities in the Near East while on his way back to Burma, for alleged seditious communication with Japan.

The considerations which dictated Japan's choice of the "Freedom Bloc" instead of U Saw's *Myochits* as collaborators are fairly obvious. Ba Maw and the Thakins were young, enthusiastic, educated, and for the most part personally honest, while U Saw had finished only the seventh standard and was a corruptionist. He took his cue too often from ill-informed Buddhists who were backed by well-to-do conservative Burman supporters of the monasteries. U Saw's *Myochit* constituency was admittedly more representative of the Burmese people, who admired the Thakins for their ardent nationalism but had no understanding of radical socialistic principles and distrusted the modernistic heterodoxy of the University. But the basic advantages to the Japanese in using the Thakins were three: (1) They had already made a clean break with the British and could be trusted therefore to keep the secret of Japanese plans; (2) they would contribute enthusiastic support for the invasion and would lend color to Japan's pretensions of liberation; (3) their intelligence and progressive outlook would not be hampered by the intimidating influence of reactionary religious groups. Japan's decision to seek active Burman collaboration committed her inescapably to generous recognition of Burman political aspirations. The Thakins would be least likely of any group to compromise on that question.

Not much is known about Japanese underground operations in Burma before the invasion. A professional man at Rangoon named Suzuki headed their espionage effort. Various Japanese banking and business houses in Rangoon and the barbers, photographers, masseurs, and shopkeepers scattered about no doubt aided him. Japanese fishermen operated in mysterious ways among the islands off the Tenasserim coast. Only a small group of carefully selected Burmese were made party to Nippon's military designs. These included thirty-two Thakin conspirators who were assembled on Hainan Island for coaching in their specific roles. This group eventually arranged for several score reliable key men to execute the program in Burma as planned. There was no serious attempt to precipitate a general rising against British authorities until the campaign was well under way. The initiative in these preparations was undoubtedly Japanese. That Ba Maw himself was party to the Japanese plot is highly probable, since he was retained on several occasions as legal counsel by Dr. Suzuki, head of Japanese espionage in Rangoon. But he took no part in executing Japanese plans until released from his Mogok jail in North Burma when the Japanese overran that area in late April 1942. During his imprisonment the "Freedom Bloc" had remained cautiously active.

C. BURMESE AID TO JAPAN, MILITARY AND CIVILIAN

Many difficulties, now familiar, faced the Allied military forces in the campaign of 1942. Hostile elements of the Burmese population assisted the Japanese as informers, guides, arsonists, and saboteurs. Local intelligence facilities were available only to the

Japanese. Essential labor for the operation of port and railway facilities dispersed. Supplies to make possible Chinese assistance were not at once available. The defensive value of "face" enjoyed by local British residents carried with it no appeal for native cooperation. And the government's literal appeal for law and order was to the Burmans insipid beside the intoxicating enthusiasm of their own Thakin leaders of the independence movement.

Chief among the active organizations focussing both the Burmese opposition to the Allies and aid to Japan was the "Burma Independence Army." Originally recruited and partly equipped by Japanese agents, this army was designed more for propaganda than for military purposes. Under the aegis of the Thakins, several hundred enthusiastic but untrained young men responded to the first appeal; and eventually twenty-five to thirty thousand joined, arming themselves from abandoned British equipment. They were radical, ultra-nationalistic, and pro-Japanese. The Thakin Army regarded itself as the poor man's tool against the rich, as well as the instrument of Burma's liberation. From the Japanese point of view the body was designed to give color to the pretension that the invaders came for the purpose of freeing Burma from the yoke of Western imperialism. The Burma Independence Army was the spearpoint of the Japanese propagandist attack. It held its first review at Rangoon on 25 March 1942.

During the latter phases of the campaign, however, the Burma Independence Army fell into considerable disrepute. Its ranks came to include disorderly and criminal elements. Since the army lacked proper uniforms and was itself obliged to live off the country, its activities were sometimes identified with the looting and violence which attended the collapse of civil government. In the lower Irrawaddy delta the B. I. A. had a serious encounter with the Karens, and it incited a veritable program on Indian residents. In Upper Burma, the Army was accused of disorder and failure to suppress dacoity or armed robbery. The Japanese authorities were obliged on several occasions to restrain the enthusiastic but undisciplined group. They apparently blocked the B. I. A. from entering the Shan plateau; they rebuffed its moves in the Arakan region; they checked its activities generally throughout Upper Burma. When the campaign ended, the B. I. A. was becoming a nuisance to the Japanese and an important factor in creating social disorder.

The radical Thakins also set up "Free Burmese Civilian Administrations" in the wake of the advancing Nipponese forces. This movement started at Tavoy and moved northward. Larger cities like Moulmein and Rangoon were administered directly by the Japanese authorities, but elsewhere in Lower Burma the Free Burmese Administrations exercised control. Prior Japanese planning was responsible for the promptness with which the movement started and the similarity of pattern followed throughout.

The Thakin plan of government was both simple and thoroughgoing. All local officials under the British regime, including the village headmen, were set aside in favor of agents operating under Thakin-appointed Chief Administrators for the several districts. The latter officers superintended committees of eight or ten men, each of whom headed up one phase of local governmental administration. Eventually the President of the Thakin party, Tun Ok, was installed at Rangoon and given power to review all such appointments. But in actuality no effective central control was exercised, with the result that policy and degrees of inefficiency varied widely from place to place.

The Free Burmese officials received no pay, and the people paid no taxes aside from their obligation to feed and house both the civilian and military branches of the Thakin authorities. But the latter laid a heavy hand on the well-to-do. They arbitrarily requisi-

tioned supplies, valuables, transportation facilities, and premises as needed. By the beginning of the rains in June 1942, the arrogant Free Burmese Administrations had made themselves highly unpopular with village elders and other conservative Burmans. In Upper Burma, the Japanese authorities had placed men of their own choosing in the key district posts at Myingyan, Shwebo, Kyaukse, and Mandalay so that the Free Administrations never got under way. The general situation was ripe in the summer of 1942 for a transition to the more conservative leadership under the newly liberated Dr. Ba Maw.

II. CHRONOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT OF JAPANESE POLICY TO 1 AUGUST 1943

A. THE DISPLACEMENT OF THAKIN CONTROL, JUNE-JULY 1942

At the close of hostilities in May 1942, Burma was in a deplorable state. Hundreds of towns and villages were in ruins. Transportation was at a standstill. The former inmates of all of the prisons and insane asylums were at large. Arson, looting, and physical violence were raging everywhere. The anarchic situation was obviously beyond the control of the Free Burmese Administrations, and drastic measures were called for.

As their first move the Japanese military authorities assembled at Maymyo on 3 June 1942 a selected group of Burman political leaders to serve as a Central Government Preparatory Committee. Dr. Ba Maw was appointed head of the group on 6 June. This Committee was charged with laying the groundwork for a Provisional Government and mobilizing Burmese support for the Japanese regime. The conquerors pledged themselves to end the prevailing disorder and promised post-war independence for Burma. About the first of July the Committee moved its headquarters to Rangoon.

The second move of the Japanese authorities was to install their own "Peace Commissioners" in all important centers. Their duties were to assist in the restoration of law and order and to watch over the activities of the Free Burmese Administrations. When the Japanese officials began to set aside the policies and decisions of the Thakin governmental agencies, the authority of the latter evaporated, and when titular Burmese Governors were eventually selected on nomination by Ba Maw's Central Preparatory Committee the Thakin-controlled Free Burmese Associations were eliminated entirely. The Japanese Peace Commissioners, in *de facto* control, enlisted the sympathy of the conservative Burmese gentry by returning as much as possible of the requisitioned property which the Thakins had seized. Both the Karens and the Indians were taken under Japanese protection. Indian landlords were even permitted to submit proof of their titles.

Important leaders of the Thakin party were placated by being granted prominent places in Ba Maw's central administration, but the rank and file of the unpopular Thakin officialdom in outlying areas were summarily displaced. The population generally welcomed this move towards more conservative control.

The third measure of the Japanese in lessening Thakin control was to demobilize the turbulent Burma Independence Army, many of whose officers refused to act under Japanese direction. Most of the troops were given a small gratuity and sent home at the end of July 1942. Colonel Aung San, who had been placed in command on 5 July 1942, and a few other high officers were allowed to carry on at the head of a skeleton force of two or three thousand men, which was rechristened on 24 August as the Burma *Defense* Army. Martial enthusiasm immediately declined. Most of the Burmese vernacular papers apologized profusely to their readers for the shabby treatment accorded by the authorities to Burma's national heroes, although a widespread conservative opinion, critical of the Army, approved its disbandment.

The recrimination against the Japanese which developed within certain elements of the B. I. A. ranks is reflected in the first hand disclosures of the refugee Thakin Thein Pe. It was Thein Pe's opinion that the Allies might be able to exploit in their turn the zeal and sincerity of the Independence Army against the Japanese. The latter apparently incurred this risk because of the impossibility of gaining control of the situa-

tion without the backing of conservative elements of society and the assistance of experienced Burman administrative personnel.

B. BA MAW'S PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT, AUGUST TO DECEMBER 1942

Dr. Ba Maw was selected as head of the first Provisional Government. He was one of the few recognized Burman political leaders who was not provincial in his point of view. His degree was from a French University (Bordeaux), and he was well acquainted with world affairs. He was a clever lawyer and an experienced administrator. He was avaricious for power, but not personally dishonest. Ba Maw had organized the "Freedom Bloc" and was committed to social policies under his *Sinyetha* (poor man's party) program which were almost as far to the left as were the communistic leanings of the Thakins. Hence his elevation fitted well into the scheme for the amalgamation of his *Sinyetha* and the Thakin or *Dobama* parties into the sole authorized political organization within the country. Ba Maw was capable of playing an arbitrary, dictatorial role. His first public statement proclaimed "One Party, One Blood, One Voice, One Command!"

The Provisional Administration as set up by Ba Maw on 1 August 1942, was on pre-war lines. Under the nine Government Departments operating from Rangoon were thirty-odd Burmese district Governors and Chiefs of Police recommended by the Central Preparatory Committee. A number of the higher posts were reserved for former members of Ba Maw's "Freedom Bloc" and the collaborating Thakin leaders, but the routine administrative posts were filled largely with career men connected with neither party. Former judges, public works administrators, forestry officials, revenue collectors, civil surgeons, and even the police constabulary who had served under the British regime were invited to return to their posts under oath of allegiance to the Japanese-sponsored authorities. They combined useful qualities of administrative experience, docility, and lack of political connections. The rates of pay were less by half than the civil service had previously enjoyed.

These old members of the civil service were considered highly suspect by the ultra-nationalistic elements and their conduct was therefore severely scrutinized. Hence selected members of the Dobama-Sinyetha group were assigned as "Political Commissars" to spy upon the routine branches of the services. Thus the district Governors (Kayaing-wuns) were "advised" by political *Kayaing-gaung-saungs*. These party agents were sometimes secretly appointed and paid, so that their identity was not always discovered. In theory all matters of policy must be approved by them; but in actuality, the Japanese played off administrative and political personnel against each other.

On the village level, the hereditary elders and headmen were intimidated and sometimes displaced by township political agents called *Athin Okatas*, who operated through lesser *Thamadis* with the assistance of local village committees. After the Japanese military retired, civil authority in frontier areas remained for months ill-defined if not entirely lacking. Postal, telephonic, and telegraphic facilities were only partially restored and were never made available to the public. Civil hospitals remained closed. The government stressed surveillance at the expense of service.

Judicial functions from the outset were separated from administrative aspects of the government. A Supreme Court for Civil Affairs was set up at Rangoon in July 1942 headed temporarily by Ba Maw's older brother, Dr. Ba Han. This gave way eventually to a High Court under the Provisional Government. Full-time Burmese judges functioned in divisional, district, and township courts for civil suits. The Japanese Commander adjudicated all military offenses and cases involving Japanese. He could also review

decisions of the Rangoon High Court. The Burmese language displaced English as the official language of the courts on 30 July 1943, but judges continued to base decisions on British law. English was used in the official correspondence of the Central Government, and was the principal medium of communication between the Japanese and the Burmese authorities. Criminal jurisdiction seems to have been reserved at the outset for the party agencies and the Military Police.

The Japanese apparently took little responsibility for administrative detail, and relegated their own participation to the background. To all appearances the Burmese agencies enjoyed complete administrative autonomy. Except for policing activities, military coercion was kept carefully out of sight. As a notable exception, the Japanese controlled the budget directly, since their own funds were being used. They also installed Joint Secretaries to be associated with other key Departments of the central government. And at the district level (as indicated above, p. 5) Japanese Peace Commissioners and political advisors were associated with the Burmese officials who exerted direct supervision over the population.

The general inefficiency of Ba Maw's Provisional Government was aggravated by the political necessity of retaining in executive positions, a number of young Thakins whose primary qualification was that they had participated in revolutionary activities under British rule and had plotted with the Japanese. Only a portion of Ba Maw's personal following had had administrative experience. Dr. Thein Maung, the Minister of Finance and later ambassador to Tokyo, was probably the ablest of the group. For some time, Ba Maw's authority was probably as much lacking in substance as were his grandiose declarations of policy. Disunity and inefficiency abounded. Popular disorder threatened to get completely out of hand.

C. BASES OF BURMAN HOSTILITY TOWARD THE JAPANESE, 1942

Rising Burman opposition to the Japanese during the closing months of 1942 sprang basically from three situations: (1) violation by the foreign soldiers of Burmese dignity and sense of propriety, (2) the imposition of forced labor, (3) national distrust of Japan's political intentions.

Outrageous offenses committed by the Japanese soldiers against the persons and property of the civilian population aroused hatred and disgust. Particularly resented was the overbearing custom of the Japanese, when provoked, of slapping Burmans in the face. Criminals were barbarously tortured. Soldiers defiled monastic premises. They shot the cultivators' oxen whenever they wanted fresh meat, precipitating a serious shortage of draft animals.

Intense popular feeling developed in late 1942 over Japanese requisitioning of Burman labor to restore transportation facilities. The only system of forced labor to which Burmans were accustomed was in their industrialized prisons. They had always been decidedly uninterested in the types of common labor ordinarily performed by Indian coolies. Since food was plentiful in the villages, the Japanese need of workers was greater than the workers' need of wages. When radio appeals and other forms of cajolery failed to secure results, the military authorities established recruiting bureaus throughout all Burma which began forcibly to enroll from five to thirty workers from each village according to its size.

Popular opposition to such practices became so bitter that the Burmese authorities took the part of the people. The recruiting program at Rangoon and at Bassein apparently ran completely aground before the end of 1942. At Insein, Ba Maw counselled

the people to obey the authorities, but he intervened to secure the suspension of a military order for evacuating a large area without any compensation to the people affected. When a regular National Labor Service Bureau was established in late December 1942, empowered to force the people to cooperate with the army in rebuilding Burma's resources, Ba Maw's influence was apparently sufficient to hold up its operation. Pacification was a more urgent need than was the exaction of labor services.

As a third source of hostility towards the Japanese, politically conscious elements of the Burman population distrusted Japan's declared intentions with respect to Burma's independence. They had no desire to substitute Japanese for British masters. This feeling was particularly intense among disgruntled Thakins, including even members of Ba Maw's Provisional Government. Under any circumstances, anti-Japanese sentiment was latent in Burman nationalism and was manifesting itself as early as 1942. The Japanese Chief of Internal Affairs admitted in December 1942 that political "incidents" were growing more frequent.

It should be noted that official sources in India discounted heavily the significance of this rising nationalist opposition to Japanese control. They declared that such a development, even if true, could not mean that the Burmans had become pro-British, since their chief goal, frequently reiterated, was freedom from all foreign control.

Everything depended upon whether or not the Japanese could convince the Burmans of the sincerity of their promises of political freedom. The Japanese were trying hard. They were avoiding as much as possible interference with Burmese administrative agencies, and were taking full advantage of their enormous prestige arising from demonstrated military prowess. They had made considerable progress by the end of 1942 in enlisting the backing of socially conservative Burmans including many of the former civil servant class who feared Thakin radicalism. But the situation was far from satisfactory from the Japanese viewpoint. They needed positive Burman cooperation to grapple with the problems of lawlessness, economic deterioration, and rising political disaffection, not to speak of defense against impending British counter-attack.

D. JAPAN'S PLEDGE OF INDEPENDENCE FOR BURMA, JANUARY 1943.

Tojo's unqualified announcement before the Japanese Diet on 28 January 1943 that Burma's independence would be recognized within the year was calculated to transform a situation which was rapidly becoming a political liability into an asset for Japan. Whether growing Burmese opposition to the Provisional Government forced the hand of Japan in this particular cannot be positively affirmed. Tokyo probably realized that right and left wing groups in Burma could be joined and political deterioration arrested only by projecting the single powerful unifying goal for all elements of the population, namely independence. The declaration was a positive and deliberate move. It was not made conditional, as were Japan's earlier proposals, on prior demonstration of Burman cooperation. Full cooperation had not been realized by January 1943. If the Japanese had thought it politically expedient to delay the declaration they could have found good excuse for doing so. Instead, they played their trump card early in the game.

Tojo's pledge altered the entire drift of Burman opinion. Japan could now appeal for united support on the ground that Burma's freedom was dependent on Japan's victory. British spokesmen admitted the force of this move if the Burmese could be persuaded to believe it sincere.

Every sort of publicity stunt was used to impress Tojo's declaration upon the consciousness of the people. The Rangoon radio made it the exclusive theme for several

weeks. One can discount considerably the advertised hysterical response of the Burmans and still recognize that a psychological victory of major proportions had been achieved by the Japanese. Burma's discontent did not immediately disappear, but the atmosphere in which the problems could be attacked was completely altered. United effort was now possible.

Ba Maw left for Tokyo in early March 1943, where he was feted and flattered on every hand and even granted an Imperial audience. Speaking before a party rally on 17 April after his return, the Premier said:

"The long sought independence of Burma has at last taken shape . . . It is up to this organ (Dobama-Sineytha) to wake the people up to their responsibility and work for the opportunity which Nippon has opened for us."

By the middle of April the Government's propaganda and the inconclusive results of the Arakan campaign were having decisive effect. Burman feeling was steadily becoming unified behind the Japanese program.

The crucial question of whether or not the British would return immediately to Burma was answered in the negative during March and April, while Ba Maw and the Japanese were completing their plans. General Wavell's thrust toward Akyab encountered difficulties in the way of terrain and a Japanese defense too great to overcome. The Arakanese were not unfriendly apart from the fact that they resented the presence of Indian troops. In the Chindwin area, the local population was affording increasing assistance to the Japanese. The Wingate expedition of 1943 into the Kachin sections of northern Burma found the population friendly, but hesitant to cooperate openly for fear of Japanese reprisals. Wingate found no organized anti-Japanese activity to balance the influence of secret enemy agents; nor were the people as yet suffering serious economic privation under the new regime. The important military achievements of the "Chindits" were lost on the villagers who witnessed instead the piecemeal retirement of harried groups, necessarily leaving their collaborators to the mercies of the Japanese. A report from New Delhi concluded that the villagers of north Burma would think twice before they gave help another year. The British had lost face.

E. PREPARATION FOR BURMA'S INDEPENDENCE, MAY TO AUGUST 1943

The formation of a Burma Independence Preparatory Committee on 1 May 1943 was sequel to the events of the previous three months. It marked the triumph of Ba Maw's Provisional Government in enlisting responsible Burman support. A number of the Committee members were Burman leaders who had been pro-British in their sympathies. The group included three ex-Ministers, one ex-Senator, seven ex-members of the House of Representatives, the former Commissioner of Rangoon, the former Advocate-General, an ex-Chief Justice of the High Court, and a leading representative from both the Karen and the Burmese Christian communities. Two of the members had been knighted by the British King. Only nine of twenty-two were Thakins. The Committee met on 8 May and began the task of drafting an instrument of government.

During the three months that the Independence Preparatory Committee sat at Rangoon, Ba Maw kept in close touch with Tokyo authorities. At Shonan (Singapore) in early July he saw Tojo, who duly impressed the Burmese leader with Burma's responsibility for defending Greater East Asia and for securing the independence of India. Tojo was pleased by the cordial attitude of his visitor. He declared that the Burmese were the first nation of East Asia that had fully and spontaneously attached itself to Japanese ideals. Japan, he said, would never permit Burma to be enslaved again. Mr.

Renzo Sawada, an experienced and able career diplomat, was designated by Tokyo as Burma's ambassador-adviser on 20 July. He was installed at Rangoon on 26 July. His appointment was an indication of the importance which Japan attached to Burma.

Burma's formal declaration of independence, at Government House on the morning of 1 August 1943, was a gala affair. Following the reading of the Declaration, which stressed repeatedly Burma's obligations to Japan, the spokesmen announced that Dr. Ba Maw had been proclaimed *Naingandaw Adipadi* (Chief of State) of Burma. After an appropriate five minute interval, Ba Maw entered the room to the accompaniment of royal music, the audience standing. He seated himself in the gilded chair on the dais and took an oath to rule the country honestly and with justice in accordance with the wishes of the people. Thereupon he departed again to the accompaniment of royal music. The session adjourned until eleven thirty. After a second ceremonious entry, the various Cabinet members took the oath of office followed by the several members of the Privy Council. The entire group then left the hall. At one p.m. the Declaration of Independence was broadcast to the nation. At 4:30 p.m. Burma declared war on Great Britain and the United States. This was followed fifteen minutes later by Japan's recognition of Burma's independence and the signing of an alliance pact.

Ostensibly no strings were attached to Japan's action. The treaty provided in general terms for Japanese-Burmese cooperation in the prosecution of the war and the advancement of GEA prosperity and left matters of detail to be negotiated as need arose. The Japanese military administration was explicitly withdrawn and the Burma Defense Army was transferred to governmental control and rechristened the National Defense Army. Japan promised to surrender all enemy assets: mills, refineries, factories, mines, transport and communication properties, and harbor installations to the Burma Government although for the present Japan would continue to operate all facilities for transport and communication. Apparently a preliminary pact of unknown import was also signed regulating Burman relations to the Shan States and Karenni, which had never been administered by the Provincial Government.

III. JAPANESE ADMINISTRATIVE METHODS AND OBJECTIVES

A. CHARACTER OF THE NEW BURMA GOVERNMENT

The personnel of Burma's "independent" government as announced on 1 August 1943 was evidence of the increasing stability of Ba Maw's regime. The new group of men was stronger and more representative than was the Preparatory Committee, all twenty-two of whom continued to serve in the Government in some capacity or other. There were now five ex-Ministers from the British regime instead of three, six ex-Senators (four of whom had been appointed by the Governor) instead of one, ten former members of the House instead of seven, a former Burmese Acting-Governor, two additional persons who had been knighted by the British King, and an additional ex-member of the High Court. Thakin influence in the Cabinet remained strong, with six portfolios out of the sixteen, but Ba Maw held the balance of power. Thakins held the posts of Deputy Prime Minister, Communications and Irrigation, Welfare and Publicity, Foreign Affairs, Defense, Education and Health, and Agriculture. Two Thakins, Tun Ok and Ba Sein, lost their portfolios, perhaps because of incompetence or personal differences, and had to be content with the empty honor of ambassadorial appointments to Nanking and Manchukuo. They were replaced by Left-wing Thakins. Dr. Thein Maung continued temporarily in the post of Finance Minister, assisted by U Aye, former Minister of Home Affairs (1940) under U Saw, as Taxation Minister. Justice and Home Affairs were in experienced hands. The strong Supreme Court and the twenty-odd "elder statesmen" named to the Privy Council were calculated to serve as the balance wheel. Conspicuously absent were important political leaders who had previously drawn support from reactionary pongyi elements. The Government was not under priestly control.

The provisional Constitution, which had been drawn up by the Independence Preparatory Committee, concentrated virtually the entire authority of the state in the hands of Ba Maw, the *Adipadi*. He could appoint and dismiss Cabinet and Privy Council members at will, and exercise full legislative and judicial authority. Cabinet Ministers must operate within policy framework determined by Ba Maw in consultation with the group as a whole. The Privy Council was in no sense a legislative body or public forum, but merely an agency to assist the Adipadi on matters of budget, taxation, and treaties if and when he might seek its counsel. It was actually assembled only three times from 1 August to May of the following year. If circumstances should permit, the Adipadi was more or less committed to inaugurate machinery for popular legislation within a year following the date of independence or within a year after the termination of the war, but the initiative presumably was entirely in his hands. He could establish a Public Service Commission to select Government officials and could set up a body to draft a permanent constitution whenever he chose to do so. No limits were set for Ba Maw's war-time tenure of office. The Government was, theoretically a personal rather than a party dictatorship. Even the Dobama-Sinyetha party members took an oath of allegiance to the Adipadi personally.

B. APPLICATIONS OF JAPANESE CONTROL

Top authority in Burma lay with the Japanese military command wherever they saw fit to exercise it. They took over the operation of all existing transportation and rapid communication facilities, and supervised extensive new road and railway construction. They supervised the enlisting and employment of all labor levies. They requisitioned food, materials and draft animals as needed, although they usually paid

for supplies taken. To check the spread of epidemic disease, the military imposed compulsory inoculation upon travellers using the railways or important highways. The army also sponsored the anti-rat campaign for the suppression of cholera. Military Police were active in suppressing dacoit bands especially in districts through which lines of communication ran.

In actual theaters of operation, high-handed repressive measures were imposed. The military commanders dictated the choice of village headmen and held their appointees personally responsible for compliance on the part of their villages with all orders and regulations imposed. Unpaid home-guard units called *Kaibodan* (Japanese term meaning literally "coast" or "frontier" guard) were organized for each community. More important were the secret *Giyudan* (volunteer force) under Japanese pay which were drawn frequently from "bad hat" elements and recruited in each village for intelligence and counter-espionage purposes. The only way the villagers could escape from the system was to flee to the jungle.

Japanese civilian advisers of the Burma Government functioned behind the scenes in unpublicized fashion. The single early exception was Renzo Sawada, Japanese ambassador and plenipotentiary, who openly took over the direction of Burma's foreign policy as adviser to Foreign Minister Thakin Nu. Although Burma was recognized as an independent state by various Axis members and satellites, her diplomatic relations were restricted to Tokyo alone under a special Japanese qualification of the prerogatives of sovereignty. Anonymous Japanese advisers participated on all important committees connected with war mobilization: labor service, price control, agricultural adjustment, religious and cultural affairs, and propaganda. The names of important agents appear in Appendix A.

The Japanese controlled Burma's financial affairs partly through the multifarious operations of the Yokahama Specie Bank and the official Southern Regions Development Bank, and partly by virtue of their advisory capacity to the Burma Central Bank which they helped start in January 1944. The key figures in the latter connection were the Chief Adviser Chuichi Shimoōka, formerly head of the Kyoto branch of the Bank of Japan, and Deputy Adviser Tsuyoshi Ishida, head of the Burma branch of the Southern Development Bank. A "supreme economic adviser" in the person of a prominent Japanese professor and statesman, Gotaro Ogawa, was sent to Rangoon in December 1943, allegedly at the request of the Burman Government. His work will be considered in a latter connection.

The major portion of routine governmental control over the people was entirely in Burman hands. Minor officials as well as the population generally were apparently convinced that Burma was in fact independent, while higher officials contributed to the illusion by persistently stressing the theme of Burma's great debt to Japan. Education, religious affairs, revenue and taxation, audit and civil law were left in Burmese hands. Native initiative was also permitted in social activity for nationalist and war-promotional ends.

C. THE DIFFICULT ROLE OF BA MAW'S DICTATORSHIP

Japan's reason for making broad political concessions to Burma was expressly to facilitate the regimentation of the nation for war. The military authorities intended, of course, to supervise the operation. But the "independent" Burma Government, as an ally of Japan and legally an enemy of Britain and America, was to be the instrument for bringing the people into line. By concentrating theoretical dictatorship in the hands of

Ba Maw the Japanese obliged him to assume the responsibility for mobilization, including the disciplining of his intractable countrymen.

The Adipadi functioned therefore not only at the level of collaboration with his Japanese advisers, but also as leader of the official party and as head of the regular administrative hierarchy. The official *Dobama-Sinyetha* party membership was youthful and reasonably honest, nationalistic but lacking experience, and only fairly well disciplined. Party leaders dominated the Cabinet and the Burma Army. Through a special Anashin (Dictator's Committee and the so-called Guidance Corps, set up in September 1943, the rank and file party members championed the policies of the Government before the people. Only a few members were qualified to occupy high administrative posts. But as district political advisers, or *Kayaing gaung saungs*, they exercised officious authority. Only the courts appear to have been free from their direct supervision.

Although the party was handicapped by the jealousy of the Burmese elders and weakened by some cleavages, there nevertheless was no rival group in Burma that could approach it in aggressiveness and cohesive strength. Nevertheless a party made up of revolutionary agitators is not easy to control. Their relations with the older civil service personnel whom Ba Maw was obliged to use for the performance of subordinate administrative duties, were particularly bad. New nationalist leaders denounced the service members as fawning parasites and suspected them of harboring pro-British sentiments. Denied political support, the regular civil administration could not command proper respect and obedience from the people. Their morale was also reduced by drastic economies in administrative expenditures.

Ba Maw's position was highly vulnerable. He was fully committed to collaboration with the Japanese. He also personified Burma's political and social aspirations as the leader of their "independent" Government and the head of the only legal political party. He was, at the same time, responsible for the maintenance of law and order, the collection and expenditure of public funds, and the promotion of public welfare generally. These would be difficult tasks under the most favorable conditions. The sole unifying factor was the spontaneous response of all Burmese to the cause of Burma's independence.

Ba Maw's inordinate pride and personal ambition prevented him from admitting to the Japanese that he did not dare to force on his people full compliance with Japanese demands for fear of alienating popular support. He had many political enemies in the country. His followers for the most part were unorthodox radicals whose roots did not go much deeper into Burma's cultural traditions than the fervid political agitation which characterized the decade preceding the war. If Tokyo's grant of independence should prove an empty gesture, popular support of Ba Maw would disintegrate.

Ba Maw took his exalted position very seriously. His slogan, "One Party, One Blood, One Voice, and One Command," was far from democratic; his public appearances were invariably dramatic and attended by royal music; he received the oath of allegiance to himself personally from all Government officials; he treated the Privy Council, drawn from all political groups, as a mere advisory body available for consultation at the behest of the Sovereign. The official Government newspaper *Bama Khit* (*Burmese Era*) which he inaugurated in November 1943 featured the Adipadi's picture in numerous poses, described his facial expressions, quoted his utterances in full, and catalogued his daily routine. The Japanese flattered Ba Maw by having an artist paint his portrait in oil and a sculptor prepare a six-foot statue of him.

The build-up of Ba Maw's preeminence was obviously overdone. Ten days after

his elevation as Adipadi a leading newspaper editor berated his countrymen for showing their lack of respect for the leader's authority as follows:

"If a man works for the country in a certain position it is thought that dislike for the individual should be set aside, and due respect should be given to his superior position on every occasion."

In late August 1943 the Adipadi himself exhorted his people to demonstrate a greater degree of confidence in the leaders of the government and army, and warned that vicious criticism of the party would not be tolerated. The formal celebration of independence was delayed from 1 August until 25 September when it was made to coincide with Japan's cession of all but two of the Shan States to Burma, and with the rising propagandist pressure for greater cooperation with the Tokyo New Order in Eastern Asia. There was much spontaneous enthusiasm for independence, but little for the new regime.

Disaffected elements of Upper Burma were given a limited opportunity to state their grievances in early October 1943 at a four-day conference of eighteen district Governors. Three items on the agenda concerned (1) a reexamination of the entire domestic political situation; (2) the maintenance of discipline for Government officials; (3) the organizational relations between the Governmental administration and the *Dobama-Sinyetha* party throughout the country.

The *New Light of Burma* of 19 October disclosed that the political advisers (*Kayaing-gaung saungs*) within the several districts were taking precedence over regular officials on the ground that they alone had access to the Adipadi. A similar meeting of the Governors of Lower Burma announced for later in the month never convened. The press repeatedly criticised Ba Maw's regime on such sore points as the continued use of the English language in high government circles, and challenged the parading of once-communistic Thakins in expensive flannel trousers and shirts of fine quality.

D. CURRENT ADMINISTRATIVE TRENDS, JUNE 1944

Some change in the administrative system which subjected Ba Maw to irreconcilable political demands was inevitable. The Adipadi did not deliver to the Japanese a regimented nation according to specifications, and was in fact encountering considerable popular opposition. In connection with a comprehensive program of economic self-sufficiency, to be described in a later connection, the newly appointed Japanese "supreme economic adviser" projected a new administrative plan early in 1944. He announced that Burma proper would be divided into three administrative regions with the Shan States constituting a fourth, each of which would be independently governed in matters of revenue, police, education, and engineering services. A Governor and Superintendent of Police was appointed for each region. Deputy Governors for the fifteen priority districts, although named by the Central Government, were given full control over the appointment and dismissal of subordinate personnel within their own jurisdictions. Fundamental decisions of policy were to be made by a joint Burman-Japanese planning committee at Rangoon.

The results of the new arrangement are still conjectural. It obviously breaks up into manageable units the unwieldy administrative system, and should conceivably force the various sections to solve their own inescapable problems. No longer is all executive action to be channelled through the Adipadi. Japanese military agencies will now be able to deal directly with each of the four regional governors who will be powerless to resist their demands. The dispersal of authority and division of patronage in-

volved in the scheme must inevitably mean an end of single-party control and the building up of rival political figures to Ba Maw. Popular discontent arising from continued lack of consumer necessities especially in Upper Burma will tend increasingly to emphasize Japanese responsibility for their sufferings. Upper Burma can realize no conceivable economic advantage from enforced economic self-sufficiency, but Mandalay's independence from Lower Burman control may gratify sectional loyalty and quiet political unrest. U Po Sa, the designated Governor at Mandalay, is a former head of Cooperative Land Mortgage Banks and Land Commissioner, a native of Kyaukse (irrigation center below Mandalay), and a follower of neither Ba Maw nor the Thakins.

The Japanese were largely responsible for introducing into Rangoon and vicinity early in 1944 a system of Neighborhood Associations for the handling of local administrative problems. Presumably the plan will be extended. The arrangement is borrowed from Japan (where it is known as *Tonarigumi*) but is similar to the so-called "ten-house *gaungs*" which operated ineffectively in Lower Burma under British rule for purposes of village police and collective resistance to dacoity. Under the Neighborhood Associations, the heads (*gaungs*) of ten-household units must accept responsibility for the conduct of every member of their respective groups. Village headmen, in turn, are obliged to arrest uncooperative *gaungs* and send them, not to the civil police, but to the Japanese authorities for punishment. The Neighborhood Associations are supposed to supervise air raid precautions, as well as commodity distribution and price control. In communities remote from theaters of operations the Associations theoretically are to take the place of the *Giyudan* (espionage) units. There is every reason to conclude from past history that Burmans will oppose any effort to introduce a neighborhood system of political espionage especially for Japanese ends and in conjunction with the rationing of consumer goods.

IV. THE MAJOR PROBLEMS OF GOVERNMENTAL ADMINISTRATION

A. REVENUE DEFICIENCY AND OFFICIAL CORRUPTION

The Burma Government has from the beginning lacked the necessary revenue resources either to insure independence of action or to sustain an effective administration. No tax collections were made in 1942, and they were resumed with great irregularity in 1943. Landowners who were confronted with their tax bills in the spring of 1943 pled inadequate warning. Many wanted the Government to accept rice in payment. Some districts asked for a revision of land assessments. Land taxes due in March were still being collected in November, a considerable portion in paddy. Municipal taxes were resumed on the basis of heavy discounts on the amounts owed. Some cash was realized by the auctioning off of liquor licenses and the promotion of a series of state lotteries (five by January 1944). Two of these realized profits of only 142,000 and 131,000 rupees respectively, a disappointing showing. It required more than six months for the government to dispose of two million rupees' worth of Independence Commemoration Bonds, issued on 1 August 1943. They bore no interest but carried chances on semi-annual prize drawings to run for ten years. In the first budget of August 1943, estimated revenues were only one fifth of expenditures.

Under the circumstances the Japanese, who underwrote the deficit through the Southern Development Bank, also dictated expenditures. It made little difference that the Burma Central Bank agreed in March 1944 to make good the contemplated 200 million rupee deficit for 1944-45, since Japanese funds made up a considerable portion of the 70 millions of capital which originally went into that institution. It was not until the final month of 1943 that funds were made available for educational purposes. The University attempted to reopen in February 1944 on the St. John's Convent grounds in Rangoon but had less than 15 percent of its prewar enrollment. The Teachers' Training College had been struggling along for the previous year in the same quarters with very small classes, since the Japanese had taken over the University estate. Other agencies were in equally bad circumstances. The civil hospitals were closed for lack of funds and personnel. The Veterinarian Department faltered so badly that cattle disease took heavy toll in central Burma, seriously aggravating the shortage of draft animals already caused by excessive slaughtering. The Forestry Department was greatly reduced as were services requiring technical engineering training.

Lack of adequate revenues had a qualitative as well as a quantitative effect on the government services. Administrative dishonesty became widespread. Reduced salaries (except on the lowest levels), rising prices, and generally impaired morale contributed to low standards of public service. Civil servants evidently regarded their opportunities for graft as the rewards of office.

The Central authorities apparently received little aid from the people in correcting abuses. A prominent Cabinet member complained in December 1943, for example, that the people talked enough among themselves about official corruption, but they refused to report specific offenses to those responsible for ending them. A "dearness" allowance, which was added to the salaries of all Government employees in January 1944 to cover increased costs of living, inspired a newspaper editor to hope that officials could now be "required to perform their respective duties conscientiously without extorting bribes." In connection with the reorganization of the administration on a regional basis, already described, the Adipadi proposed to select four regional Commissioners, "men of integrity and rich in service experience," whose immediate task would be to dismiss all un-

desirable government officials and to eradicate bribery and corruption completely. But the imposition of unpopular regulatory measures will increase the tendency for graft. Such palliative measures will not be sufficient to solve a baffling administrative problem.

B. THE PERSISTENCE OF LAWLESSNESS

The initial improvement over the anarchy which prevailed in Burma in April and May of 1942 was attributable almost entirely to Japanese efforts. Whereas the Burma Army apparently took no responsibility for suppressing lawless bands, the Japanese garrisons in the large centers and the Military Police outposts in all of the smaller towns suppressed criminals with a heavy hand. The Japanese interfered promptly in Lower Burma to rescue both the Karens and the Indians from Burmese abuse. The Burman civil police were used as a kind of auxiliary force for ferreting out illegal possession of arms and for performing unimportant chores. Within the bounds of their control the Japanese Military Police cowed the civilian population and even intimidated their own soldiery.

But repressive measures could not improve the situation beyond a certain point. Unemployment was rife and lawlessness flourished in areas remote from military control. Guns were easily obtainable and rifle ammunition was particularly plentiful. Travel in many parts of the country continued unsafe. The "bad hat" element in many quarters took up the smuggling of opium and the illegal manufacture of liquor.

Concerted efforts were made to improve this situation. Burman delegations of governmental spokesmen and politically-minded monks went to Upper Burma in September 1942 to calm the fears of the people and to explain the necessity of co-operating with the Japanese authorities. The Provisional Government also attempted to organize village defenses against dacoit bands. Educated Burmans recruited for the force were exhorted to do their utmost for the welfare of the country. The first class of ninety-eight Japanese-trained police officers was graduated in February 1943. Eventually a group of selected candidates was sent to Japan to study police administration. The Japanese High Command also made strenuous efforts to hold down friction between the army and the people. Outside the central garrisoned points, the soldiers were spread thinly. It is probable, therefore, that however offensive the Japanese soldiers may have been in particular cases, popular hostility toward them was not an important contributing factor to lawlessness.

The basic problem lay partly with police corruption and low morale, and partly with the uncooperative attitude of the public. The long-standing feud between Burmese criminal elements and the old police constabulary persisted, but with the latter now thoroughly intimidated. Similarly the tradition of popular non-cooperation with the police, carried over from British rule, was supported by general dislike of harsh Japanese methods of punishment and by fear of outlaws whom the villages might prefer to buy off rather than to oppose. With thousands of criminals at large and the public uncooperative, many of the constabulary began to supplement their meager incomes by accepting protection money from the lawless bands, especially those engaged in remunerative activities connected with opium, liquor and stolen goods. It is significant in this connection that police action against illicit opium peddlers was apparently confined to Chinese offenders although others must have been engaged in it. At the end of the first year of alien control, the discouraged Japanese Chief of Political Affairs declared flatly that the Burma police system would have to be completely reorganized and newly-trained officers sent into all of the districts.

Violent crime as well as thievery continued rampant in Burma throughout 1943. Ba Maw exhorted court judges on several occasions to exert every effort to stem the tide and provided compensation for civil servants killed or disabled while on duty. Newspapers are filled with stories about thefts of cash, opium, iron nuts and bolts, bicycles, cattle, clothing, piece goods, infants' layettes from the hospital, cooking oil, telephone wire, and even the gold off the Shwedagon pagoda. There are also numerous accounts of gambling brawls and personal attacks. Editors occasionally marvel at the courage of the police in fighting dacoit bands. The Adipadi himself did not help matters any when, in connection with Burma's declaration of independence in August 1943, he reduced the unexpired sentences of all convicts by one-third, released outright 320 prison inmates selected by lot, and commuted to life imprisonment the death sentences of five "worthy" offenders.

Japanese repressive measures were ruthless and highly unpopular. Anyone stealing military supplies, tampering with communications, or injuring Japanese personnel was liable to heavy penalty. Whole villages were wiped out for harboring offenders. Dacoits were cruelly excuted, and information was extorted from them by torture. Whipping and denial of food and water were freely used. Some "bad hats" purchased immunity by joining the *Giyudan* units and turning informers. When, in connection with the anti-rat campaign, Government inspectors threatened that the Japanese would thrash non-cooperating Burmans, the leading newspaper had harsh words for those who thus disturbed the harmony that must obtain between the people and their Japanese allies. On another occasion an editor urged that the people should trust the Nipponese army fully, since it was trying to help Burma get independence. In another attempt to improve relations the *New Light of Burma* gave full details of an act of clemency on the part of the Japanese commander at Tharrawaddy who, in the presence of respectable citizens and monks, lectured eighty persons accused of dacoity and made them drink "oath-water" and sign a statement not to be mischievous in the future. The jail was probably already full.

Some lessening of lawlessness has apparently been realized during the first half of 1944. The decline of unemployment due to an increase of domestic manufacturing activities and the enlistment, voluntary and otherwise, of practically all elements of the population in the war program, is probably the greatest contributing factor. The Government itself has also improved. It enjoys the services of many responsible leaders of Burmese public life, who have put serious effort into the attempt to establish a satisfactory administration.

The task is not easy. Progressive members of the government have constantly been obliged to defend enlightened measures against isolationist demands that they concentrate on "a special Burmese order of things." Disgruntled elements have no organized way of registering complaints because of the unrepresentative character of Ba Maw's regime. Protests have therefore been frequently channelled through the Buddhist Monastic Association. *De facto* Japanese military control acting through and around the civilian authorities has also compromised the Government's position. In spite, therefore, of the powerful appeal of the independence theme, the people have not accepted the government as their own nor accorded it financial support, compliance with official regulations or assistance in the suppression of crime. Few if any of the objectors to Ba Maw and the Japanese, however, seem to regard the United Nations as an aid in realizing their national aspirations.

V. BURMA'S ECONOMIC PROBLEMS

A. INITIAL EFFECTS OF JAPANESE CONTROL

The primary economic effects of Japanese occupation of Burma were bad. In addition to the destruction caused by military operations, and the attrition resulting from chronic lawlessness, Burma suffered paralysis of trade. The cessation of rice exports left an accumulation of some three million bushels of paddy from the 1941 crop, so that the area of cultivation for 1942 was some 30 percent under normal. Unable to sell their rice, Burmans along the rivers took up fishing, and the Japanese started a fish-canning industry. Prices were so low that farmers saw no reason to harvest their crops, until the military authorities in the fall of 1942 bought up and stored a portion of the grain carried over from the previous year. Initial efforts to encourage the raising of cotton and vegetables produced meager results. Some Indian laborers moved to Rangoon wherein they found work under the Japanese, but in general depression and unemployment prevailed.

The virtual cessation of foreign and domestic trade made stocks of many types of consumers goods irreplaceable. The shortage of cloth, thread, matches, cooking oils, soap, salt, kerosene, and leather goods became particularly acute. Thus at the very time that the paddy market was in a state of collapse, commodity prices rose alarmingly. By the spring of 1943 regular items of clothing at Rangoon cost from seven to twelve times their price in January of 1942. The liberal distribution of Japanese military currency printed on flimsy paper and graduated to decimal fractions of a rupee aggravated the price spiral. Hard money disappeared and shopkeepers accepted Japanese notes only under duress. Meanwhile thieves did a thriving business in stolen articles of clothing.

The lack of means of internal transportation hampered the distribution of goods that were available. Rail and highway facilities were used for military needs. As a result, the price of rice in the dry belt of central Burma in March 1943 was several times that at Rangoon. Cumulative problems arising from the dislocated economy were unevenly distributed. The relatively self-sufficient villager suffered much less privation at the outset than did his city cousin. The imposition of an equitable system of uniform prices was impossible under the circumstances. In addition, the bargaining traditions of the Oriental bazaar stood firmly in the way of any fixed price standards. Executive orders condemning profiteering and black market operations, therefore, had little effect.

Under these difficult circumstances the Government found it necessary to give the paddy cultivators some tangible assistance. The Government lowered farm rents, and set up Cooperative Credit Associations (which about ten percent of the peasants joined), and Land Mortgage banks to protect owners from forced transfer of title. 750,000 rupees were appropriated for agrarian purposes. Cultivators paid virtually no taxes in 1942. Accumulated interests on debts, owed particularly to the Indian Chettyar moneylenders, was cancelled. The debt-ridden delta farmers could at least be grateful that their burden of interest-payments was lifted; and could even look forward to attaining direct ownership of paddy tracts. The Japanese ruled that non-resident landlords, mostly Chettyars, could recover their holdings only if they established proof of their claims, a thing difficult to do because most of the records had been destroyed. The Chettyars were not allowed to return to the moneylending business, but their agents did revive in December 1942 the old Bank of Chettinad as the People's Bank. This institution has served as a repository for Chettyar claims and has derived some income from land rentals paid in kind and at approximately half of the previous rate.

But the underlying economic situation could not be improved by such superficial expedients. By the end of 1942 the people were criticizing the Government severely for not doing anything to correct unemployment or the lack of a market for their rice. Ba Maw appealed publicly for patience with his Government as well as for popular understanding of the Japanese.

B. EFFORTS TO SOLVE THE AGRICULTURAL PROBLEM

In early May 1943 the Department of Agriculture announced a scheme to buy rice at Rs. 80 per 100 baskets of 46 pounds each (a low price but considerably above the market) from the farmers of the thirteen rice-growing districts of Lower Burma. Purchases from a given individual beyond the first 300 baskets would be paid for 50 percent in cash and the remainder in promissory notes (Price Bonds) of the Executive Administration. The program was to begin in June and extend over a four-months' period. Special supervisory officers undertook to enforce the regulations. The scheme was not intended to solve the problem; it was essentially a response to popular agitation for some measure of relief for needy cultivators who had neither the means nor the incentive to plant a new crop, and who threatened to surrender their tenancies. A government spokesman exhorted the discouraged cultivators to grow cotton, jute, ground nuts, sesamum, castor beans, and vegetables instead of rice. People, he insisted, should cease grumbling about the war not being over and instead apply their energies productively so that they might be able to live through it.

As the rainy season came to an end in late September 1943, it was apparent that something drastic would have to be done about Burma's agricultural situation. The glut of paddy was the principal embarrassment. Numerous complaints were current about dishonest dealings of Government purchasing agents, and the fifty percent cash ruling included in the scheme had reduced the effective price to only 40 rupees per 100 baskets, a figure considerably below the cost of production. In Bassein district the price eventually sagged to a mere 20 rupees. Meanwhile Japanese interruption of civilian freight shipments to Upper Burma produced the astounding price at Mandalay of 800 to 1,100 rupees for 100 baskets of paddy. The situation was complicated by the worst rice crop in years. The total acreage was only around sixty percent of normal and in some areas of the delta it was only one-third. Lateness of the rains reduced the crop to an average of fifty percent of normal, or approximately one million tons above annual local consumption. But in Upper Burma where shortage already existed from lack of transportation, cattle disease played havoc with cultivation. The yield here was at least one-half million tons short of actual needs.

The effort to divert paddy farmers to jute and cotton production turned out very badly. Some jute was planted in five districts of the delta, but the soil and climate of the area were not suitable for cotton. Scandalous fraud in the Cotton Distribution Association also demoralized the program. The total cotton acreage for 1943 was actually lower than in the previous year. In Upper Burma, where the price of rice was high, no economic incentive obtained for cultivators to change over to unfamiliar commodities and methods of cultivation.

It was necessary for a special State Paddy Advisory Council to begin sessions in late September 1943. It emerged in October with a proposal that the government buy 52 million baskets of paddy (about 1.2 million tons), the estimated surplus of the new crop, at 80 rupees per 100 baskets. The treasury would also redeem for cash the promissory notes given out under the previous purchase scheme. Those who sold paddy to private purchasers would get 20 rupees extra at the outset and another 20 when the rice reached the government warehouses. The authorities thereafter would undertake to sell rice from

government stocks at a fixed price. This latter policy depended of course, upon their ability to distribute rice. The Council also proposed to have the state purchase land and assign it to needy tenant farmers who would agree to substitute cotton and jute cultivation for rice. A reorganized Burma Cotton Guild and a Cotton Control Bureau would absorb that commodity and promote the manufacture of cloth. The actual hiring of Paddy Inspectors at 300 rupees per month plus travelling allowance began early in January 1944. Applicants must have had experience in the rice business and be able to provide character testimonials from two high government officials.

Meanwhile the Agricultural Department lent 4,500,000 rupees to Lower Burma cultivators to enable them to harvest their crops. Most of the fund was given directly to agriculturalists not members of cooperatives, on the basis of village security only. District officers administering the program were exhorted to "carry out their duties conscientiously . . . placing the interests of the country in the forefront." In the meantime, the Youth's League, official Dobama Sinyetha party members, village political advisers (*gaung saungs*) and the National Service Association organized voluntary bands to help in the harvesting. Apparently most of the meager crop was gathered.

The final decision on the rice control program was to try to stabilize annual production at 4 million tons or about two-thirds the pre-war level. The 1944-45 budget allocated 37 million rupees for government purchase of rice but recoveries of loans made during the previous year were included within that sum. The government would also purchase all of the new cotton, ground nut and sessamum seed, and allocate such produce for consumption purposes. Farmers cooperating in the cotton program would be supplied by the Government with salt, sugar, matches, and other daily necessities. The Government advocated also the growing of vegetable gardens, the protection of draft cattle, and the reexamination of the system of Cooperative Associations.

The eventual plan of Burma's agricultural program for 1944 as formulated by a supreme Japanese adviser, Otarō Ogawa, followed in general the lines laid down in the autumn of 1943.

C. ATTEMPTS AT RATIONING AND PRICE CONTROL

Several attempts of the Burmese authorities during 1943 to impose rationing and price control were unsuccessful. Any such effort was bound to be difficult in Oriental bazaar marketing where no price had ever been fixed and every purchase was normally the occasion for bargaining. The first regulations imposed in May 1943 applied only to meat, fish, and kerosene; while other articles in short supply such as onions, jaggery (sugar), cooking oil, salt, and many other foods were not at first affected. The controlled price of fish and pork was about double the pre-war figure, and beef was two-thirds higher. Volunteer watchers near the meat stalls of the bazaars reported sales above the fixed price and secured the arrest of offenders. When one merchant refused to sell his live fish at fixed prices, customers killed, weighed, and purchased them under immediate police authorization. The opposition of merchants in Yamethin district in central Burma was so great that the controlled prices were available only for government officials and members of the police. Volunteer groups and police seized the entire stock of a pork profiteer at Rangoon, and a quantity of hoarded oil and other goods at Thonze and placed them on sale at controlled prices. In Rangoon the distribution of kerosene was handled by the sale of tickets to householders redeemable at dealer's shops, who in turn collected the price of their oil from the government.

The merchants generally countered official regulation by withholding their goods from the market. Well-to-do consumers had to buy clandestinely at exorbitant prices;

the poor did without. The leading Rangoon newspaper accused the Government of excessive benevolence towards the poor without proper regard for the interests of the merchants. The editor criticized severely the arbitrary methods adopted by the police and the youthful vigilantes, the *Kay-bo-daing*, to enforce uniform price control. Many important items, such as cooking oils and vegetables, he pointed out, were not covered at all. The editor also declared that government rice purchases would not help if the needed consumers' goods were not made available for purchase. The Burman authorities, he concluded, must arrange to import the necessary commodities.

When the government attempted in early August to establish temporary price ceilings for foods other than meat, the entire structure of control broke down. This breakdown started at Henzada where the Commissioner, after consulting with the merchants, abruptly withdrew his order for the temporary fixing of prices of chillies, onions, and cooking oil, and restored freedom of trade. The action was hailed by the brokers of Rangoon, and the supplementary orders had to be withdrawn. Hoarded goods immediately reappeared on the market but the relief was more psychological than material. The regulations regarding meat prices remained theoretically in force, but with only occasional attempts at enforcement. Spiraling prices caused increased dismay. The Burman authorities sought in vain for Japanese assistance in improving the supply and distribution of foodstuffs, clothing and other commodities.

A comparison of prices of staple items clearly shows how local production and distribution have failed to make good the lack of consumers' goods arising from cessation of imports. Clothing prices at Rangoon in April 1943 were seven to twelve times the pre-war figure. Sewing thread was seventeen times as costly. The mobilization of textile equipment within Burma and Japanese shipment of some old spinning and weaving machinery to Rangoon in July apparently did little more than retard the rate of deterioration and provide the army with minimum needs. By November the price of a longyi (Burmese skirt) and shirt at Bassein was more than twice as much as at Rangoon in April. Matches cost Rs. 1 per small box. Sugar was a Japanese monopoly except in the black market at 8 to 10 rupees per viss (three and one-half pounds).

The price situation became progressively worse in the north. Nails cost Rs. 25 per viss at Prome, and constituted about half the cost of constructing a boat. Dried fish was almost four times more costly at Prome than at Rangoon. At Mandalay in November 1943, a basket of rice cost Rs. 20 while harvest hands received Rs. 4 per day plus meals and cheroots as against $\frac{3}{4}$ rupee in 1940. Pork and fowls cost 7 to 11 rupees per viss (twice their price at Rangoon); shirts were Rs. 35 each even though strictly rationed. Old bed linen was being cut out for clothing. At Myitkyina, still farther north, clothing was unobtainable even for soldiers at the end of the year. Salt cost Rs. 12 per viss; rice Rs. 23 per basket at the controlled military prices; matches Rs. 4 to 5 for a box of sixty sticks. Japanese agents commandeered country boats to bring up rice for the army alone, and systematically stripped the inhabitants of what food they did not hide.

✓ The shortage of consumers' goods was so serious that Ba Maw carried the demand for relief direct to the Greater East Asia Conference at Tokyo in November 1943. In his principal speech the Adipadi at the Conference insisted that the civilian front could not effectively support the military front without proper food, clothing, housing, and transportation, and that the resources of all GEA should be made available to defend the particular point attacked. Unreported at the time was his proposal that a representative Standing Central Committee or Council be set up to care for "such vital problems as food and transportation." The same point was echoed in the Rangoon rally celebrating the Conference when the Burmese Deputy Premier told his troubled listeners that

economic discussions "involved such issues as the fair exchange of commodities, and the mutual supplying of goods to each country." But neither the goods nor the shipping was available, and military considerations took complete precedence with the Japanese. The people and the civilian authorities of Burma were left to fend for themselves.

When the Rangoon authorities in September 1943 began perforce to consider the re-establishment of effective price control, two Control Boards were set up, one Burmese and the other Japanese. Discussion presumably took the form of negotiation. Notably absent from the Burmese board were the radically minded Thakins, and present on it were conservative representatives of the Privy Council, the Burmese Chamber of Commerce, and the Burma Services Association. Equally significant was the fact that the Japanese would now be party to any joint decision. Action was long delayed, in spite of increased newspaper complaint about soaring prices.

One trend which the negotiations over commodity controls were taking was indicated by the announcement in October that the ten-household Neighborhood Associations (already mentioned in connection with Japanese Administration) would be utilized in Burma for distributing food commodities. Branches of the Associations were supposed to have been set up for this purpose in all the principal cities and towns by mid-November. The Government after consultation with buyers and sellers issued the first order for the control of food prices on 15 November. From neither traders nor the public was satisfactory cooperation secured. On 1 December all dealers in Rangoon and vicinity selling eighteen specified varieties of foodstuffs (nine types of meat, six vegetables and eggs, rice and cooking oil) were commanded to register with the Commodity and Price Control Branch before 31 December on pain of three years' imprisonment and/or fine. A Government spokesman declared that public trading in the black market and protection of hoarders must not defeat this second attempt to set up effective price controls. The proposed price levels for specific items of food, if and when they should be available, were eventually arrived at by joint discussion between the Government Price Controller, officials of the local branch of the Defense League, Nipponese officers, and the brokers and merchants concerned.

On 6 January 1944 the first control order of 15 November was explicitly repealed and order no. 3 substituted. This latter listed maximum prices, both wholesale and retail, for all kinds of fish, *ngapi* (fish paste), beef, pork, mutton, fowls, eggs, and onions. The order applied only to Rangoon and immediate vicinity. Purveyors of the specified goods were forbidden to hoard, or refuse to sell, or to adulterate either quality or weight on pain of a three years' imprisonment and/or fine. Absolute shortage of clothing made pointless any attempt at price control of this commodity. Instead the East Asia Youth's League in certain communities began in November to distribute used clothing to the needy.

That this further effort at price control was ineffective because of popular non-cooperation is substantiated by the announcement by the Japanese on 12 February 1944 that the first 19 Neighborhood Association leaders and their 120 assistants for Rangoon had only then been named and that the system would be extended shortly into three adjacent districts of the delta. The Neighborhood Associations were supposed to have been already enforcing the commodity control program for three months in all important Burman towns. Under conditions of rising popular resentment over shortage of goods, the organization of Neighborhood Associations was likely to crystallize discontent rather than secure compliance to regulations.

D. THE PROBLEM OF CIVILIAN GOODS TRANSPORTATION

With the railroad completely monopolized by the Japanese for military purposes, the government did what it could to move foodstuffs and other goods to needy areas. Rice was plentiful in all points of Lower Burma and country boats could serve the delta. Upper Burma was the principal problem. The Government's Transport Bureau opened a training class for prospective officers in early November 1943. The leader announced at the outset that the major problem was lack of vehicles. Party agencies were also active. The *Kayaing gaung saung* (Burmese district political adviser) of Thayetmyo prepared a series of through cart tracks over which "convoys of food" could travel northward. The Commerce Department in January 1944 announced plans for opening four distribution depots at Myingyan, Sagaing, Yenanyaung, and Pyawbwe. The Propaganda Bureau announced on 23 January that "it only remains for food and clothing difficulties to become less and be over before very long."

Both rice cultivation and cart transportation in Upper Burma were hampered by the lack of draft cattle. Excessive slaughtering by the military had started the problem. Anthrax and hoof-and-mouth disease had followed, killing off half or more of the oxen in central Burma. Bullocks had to be purchased from Lower Burma at six to ten times the price they had been worth before the invasion. The newspapers in October 1943 began to advocate more effective government control over slaughtering. Privately sponsored meetings urged the people on both economic and religious grounds to stop eating the flesh of cattle and buffaloes. By January 1944 the Propaganda Bureau itself was asking the people to abstain from eating beef in order to avoid entire depletion of the cattle supply. The Education and Health Department tried to cancel all butchers' licenses, and found that black market operations and bribery were blocking their endeavor. Some communities eventually banded together to purchase the local slaughtering licenses at auction and thus prevent further killing. Long range Japanese plans for increased cattle and horse breeding were of no assistance in the immediate situation.

The Burman demand for access to some railway facilities finally reached the public press. *The Sun* on 19 December served notice that if the Government did not take effective measures to improve transportation and provide food at reasonable prices, discontent might get out of hand. On 18 January 1944, a meeting of Rangoon merchants petitioned the Government that Burmans be allowed to use certain railway stations in Upper Burma for transport of goods southward. Their assumption was that freight cars would be returning empty after carrying military supplies up-country. It was a matter of considerable rejoicing when on 2 February 1944 the Yamethin station was reopened for civilian use after being closed for eight months. But this slight concession merely emphasized the general prohibition. There still was no more than token opportunity (one car a day) for north-bound traffic. The Director of Propaganda complained in the same issue of the paper that reported the concession, about the unspeakable difficulties of transport, and claimed that the Transport Bureau was distributing civilian food as well as military supplies by all means available. A special Ministry of Supply was created in April 1944 to attempt further to facilitate transportation, commodity control and paddy purchasing.

E. JAPANESE CONTROL OF BUSINESS ACTIVITIES

Japanese economic control in Burma centered on their monopoly of credit facilities and the operation of key industries. During the first year of Japanese control, the private Yokohama Specie Bank and its several operating branches in Burma virtually monopolized the banking business. On 3 August 1943, the official Japanese Southern Develop-

ment Bank opened business at Rangoon. It took over the management of Tokyo's treasury accounts, the underwriting of the needs of the Burma Government, and the task of approving of credits for commercial undertakings. All accounts held in anti-Axis banks has to be reported to the Japanese, and semi-annual application had to be made for the issuance and renewal of all credits of more than 100,000 rupees. A Burma Central Bank was planned to attract local deposits, sponsor a uniform currency, and take responsibility for financing governmental expenditures. It would also provide a convenient facade to conceal the actual financial control exercised by the Southern Development Bank. A young Burman was sent to Japan in July 1943 for special banking training. An important banking committee including Japanese advisers was set up in early August.

This Central Bank Committee, under the chairmanship of Dr. Thein Maung, the Finance Minister and Ambassador designate to Tokyo, recommended on 29 September that a State bank capitalized at Rs. 10 million should be opened by the first of November. Actually, the sale of capital stock did not get under way until late November, and the bank itself did not open until 11 January 1944. In the end, the capitalization was raised to 70 millions, with the Japanese probably contributing most of it.

Government sponsors of the Central Bank praised it as a means of achieving financial independence for Burma, not as a means of financing the war. It was obvious that Japanese and Burman ideas differed considerably as to proper function of the bank. To the extent that Japanese objectives of corralling Burman resources for war purposes were apparent, the popular enthusiasm for the project cooled.

On the whole there appears to have been much less aggressive activity in Burma on the part of Japanese business interests than in other lands occupied by them. It is highly significant that before the Central Bank was actually launched the Japanese authorities accepted the proposal that any Japanese engaged in non-military business in Burma should pay the same tax as Burman businessmen retroactively as of 1 August. Among the more important examples the Nippon Trading Company has taken over much of the wholesale distributing business in the country and had acted particularly as supplier for the army. The Nippon-Burma Timber Union dominates its field. The Ataka Company operates an iron works; both Mitsui and Mitsubishi handle rice and timber; the Senda Company occupies the place vacated by the British Irrawaddy Flotilla Company, with Yamashita K. K. operating additional river transport throughout the delta. The Yamaguchi Bicycle Works manufactures vehicles in Rangoon. Japanese firms have also started a match factory and a fish cannery. They have taken over the salvaging of oil and mining equipment. But Japanese immigrants have not invaded seriously those lower levels of Burma's economic life vacated by Indians and Chinese. To maintain Burman goodwill by not overcrowding their country, the Japanese have allowed little immigration. In November 1943, Domei reported only 1760 civilian nationals in the country. Prospective Japanese emigrants not specifically selected by the Army were required, after September 1943, to apply through the Emigrants Association or the Cotton Cultivators Association for recommendation by the Greater East Asiatic Affairs Minister. The Army alone issued the final permits.

The Japanese military have further cultivated conservative Burman support by encouraging the property-owning groups to become active in medium and small-scale business affairs. All "enemy" properties not needed for the war effort have been turned over to the Burma Government. Large scale credits are subject to review every six months and resident Japanese have to pay the same taxes as the Burmans as explained above.

The business appeal is a powerful one. Burmans have long complained that alien capitalists dominated their economic life and absorbed the fruits of the country's ample resources. Their three principal competitors—the British, Indians, and to some extent the Chinese—are temporarily eliminated by the war and Burmans have been avidly attempting to take advantage of their golden opportunity. To promote such ends they have organized a Chamber of Commerce and a Trades Association. The Central Bank from the Burman viewpoint was instituted to pool local capital reserves for investment purposes. The training of State Scholars to be sent to Japan has been focused in the fields of engineering, banking, industrial management, and various types of manufacturing. Upon their return the Burmans will expect them to organize businesses suitable to the country in accordance with an official Five-Year Plan for industrial development.

The fact that Burman economic agitation has thus far achieved little substantial results is not surprising. Burmans lack technical training as well as resources. Commerce generally is paralyzed for lack of transport and by attempted government price control in the face of a limited supply of goods. Private businessmen also face the competition of Thakin-sponsored cooperative stores run by the Burma Cooperative Trading Society, which have been particularly successful in Rangoon. The East Asia Youth's League also operates several cooperative stores, the profits of which are turned over to the funds of the League. Nevertheless it is true that economic opportunities for ambitious Burmans are limited more by circumstances than by overt Japanese competition. The Japanese, however, expect to provide all technical assistance from the outside that Burma will need.

F. OGAWA'S NEW PROGRAM OF ECONOMIC REGIMENTATION

The Japanese have finally discarded their hands-off policy with respect to Burma's economic problems. The Burmese authorities had tried with meager success to reorganize agriculture and to establish price control. Ba Maw's theoretical dictatorship had been unwilling or unable to coerce the cultivators after voluntary appeals failed to secure their cooperation. Famine threatened in central and northern Burma and popular discontent was on the increase. To work out a coordinated program of land utilization, Tokyo sent to Rangoon in December 1943, a "supreme economic adviser."

The man chosen for the post was General Gotaro Ogawa, formerly professor of Economics at Tokyo's Imperial University, a prominent member of the Diet, and for many years a manager of the Menseito party. He had served as Vice-Minister of Finance and, in 1936-37, was Minister of Commerce and Industry. The appointment of a ranking economist under military guise signaled Japan's intention to back the new program with the necessary force. The military could depend no longer on Adipadi Ba Maw to execute their plans.

Ogawa's assignment was to work out a scheme by which Burma could be economically self-sufficient, not only as a whole but in its several provinces as well. He accomplished a good deal during his three-months' mission to Rangoon. He got the aforementioned Central Bank in operation, outlined the drastic decentralization of governmental machinery already described (pages 14-15), decreed a policy of forced utilization of land and labor resources, began the actual organization of Neighborhood Associations, and established a Politico-Economic Collaboration Committee to supervise the entire program. He then returned to Japan at the end of March 1944, leaving the Government to explain the nature of the plan to the nation.

Of primary significance was the fact that Ogawa promised Burma practically no help in moving surplus rice or in supplying consumer goods. Burmans, he said, would

have to organize their own medium and small-scale production units equipped with make-shift facilities. Such establishments, he decreed, would have to be widely distributed so as to be near the various centers of consumption. To transport essential commodities he recommended the large scale mobilization of ox-carts. But this was only scanty relief to offer a people suffering from two years' deprivation of imported consumer goods and whose capacities for self-help were severely limited. Burma knew finally that she could expect no help from abroad, and at the same time must undergo a continued monopolizing by the military of all modern internal transport by highway, railway, or river.

Ogawa's crowning measure of regimentation is his program of land and labor utilization. Instead of purchasing unused land, as had been contemplated in the fall, the state will simply take over during the coming year all agricultural lands not being cultivated. All labor not otherwise usefully occupied will be mobilized for needed work on such lands, subject to allotment by district Governors, township officers, and local agricultural committees. All draft cattle may be similarly requisitioned and allotted as required, but if such are not available, men must pull the plows. The Government proposes to provide capital loans and subsistence for all workers on state-controlled lands, buy all of their produce at a fixed price, and superintend its allocation. The several districts have been given priority ratings for such emergency administrative measures (15 first class, 15 second class, 3 third class districts) and a planning board aided by Japanese advisors has formulated the fundamental regulations.

Mr. Ogawa did not explain how such a scheme could ever be enforced effectively in Burma by local committees, township officers and politically ambitious Deputy Governors. The Privy Council were merely informed of the total program in late March after Ogawa returned to Japan; they were not asked to approve it. How much perturbation Burman authorities felt over the prospective application of the state-directed agricultural production may be judged from the nervous shifting of administrative personnel connected with it. Agricultural Minister Than Tun transferred to the new Ministry of Supply in mid-April; the subcommittee of the Central War Council was reshuffled on 9 May; Dr. Ba Han, able brother of Ba Maw, went to Tokyo on 14 May without solicitation, apparently to present Burma's rejoinder to Ogawa's provocative scheme. Against the time when the onset of monsoon rains would open the 1944 agricultural season and force action on the plan, Ba Maw on 3 May granted a measure of self-government to 32 municipalities, initiated an effort to reform and strengthen the police administration, and set up a Government Personnel Renovation Bureau for the express purpose of eliminating uncooperative officials. The Government is preparing for difficult times.

There would appear to be no practicable alternative to Ogawa's program of enforced self-sufficiency for Burma in view of existing shortages of goods and shipping. The crucial question is whether agricultural regimentation can be attained without wide-scale military coercion. Tokyo will, of course, try to get the Burman authorities to apply the necessary persuasion, while Ba Maw will postpone that hard choice as long as possible. But the situation will not allow indefinite delay, for the planting season is at hand. Either force will be used now to whip the cultivators into line at the risk of alienating large sections, or it will be needed later to curb rioting arising from inevitable and unrelieved distress. The chances are strongly in favor of increasing military pressure to secure compliance in all critical areas. Japanese Domei on 10 June announced that "with the arrival of the planting season, farm-reared Japanese soldiers will be dispatched to each village to encourage and lead them" in accordance with details minutely planned.

VI. ATTITUDES OF SPECIAL GROUPS IN BURMA

A. THE BUDDHIST MONKS

The most important social group in Burma not represented in Ba Maw's religiously unorthodox government are the Buddhist *pongyis* (monks). Japanese occupation at the outset cost them heavily in personal inconvenience and loss of prestige. The soldiers showed scanty respect for the sanctity of *pongyi kyaungs* (monasteries). When monks complained that they were being too meagerly sustained by public gifts, they were faced with regulations limiting the number for each village and with the annoying suggestion that they set the people a good example by performing useful work. The apprehension of a large number of criminals masquerading in *pongyi* robes may have been the basis for the report that several hundred recalcitrant monks were sent down to Malaya. The devout monks were probably thoroughly frightened and withdrew as far away as possible from politics and the Japanese.

A considerable fraction of the younger politically-minded *pongyis* actively supported the Japanese during the campaign. The monks' opposition to British rule had been intense. The army shot many of them as fifth columnists. A British officer once characterized the Buddhist priests as "the worst Japanese-loving devils in all South Asia and the tap root of most of Burma's troubles." Monks were also employed by the Japanese in the latter half of 1942 to set up cooperating village committees. In October several hundred monks trained for propagandist purposes were reported operating in Upper Burma. Thus active groups of monks, whose political interests exceeded their regard for monastic vows, abandoned piety for propagandising, and, by retaining their robes, effectively neutralized the revulsion which the larger conservative faction felt for the Japanese. This latter non-political element of Buddhist clergy with its center in Upper Burma, probably would carry the greater influence with the Buddhist villager, but only if granted the same opportunity for impact.

Both Burmese and Japanese authorities went out of the way to placate the *pongyis*. Visiting generals and Ba Maw (an ex-Christian) made gifts to the Shwedagon pagoda in Rangoon. In an effort to enlist the active collaboration of the monks with the new order, Ba Maw announced a plan on 9 May 1943 to organize a *Maha Sangha* (Supreme Priesthood) Association, which the monks of all sects would be eligible to join. Immediate control would be assigned to a special Working Committee who should select the twenty elderly Chief State *Sayadaws* (Revered Teachers) to be evenly divided between Upper and Lower Burma, who would direct all religious activities of the Association. The Chief *Sayadaws* might have advisers to assist them and they could also profit by the counsel of the junior *Sayadaws*, ten from each of the thirty-odd districts of Burma.

Ba Maw's plan was argued out at Rangoon at the end of July in a stormy twelve-day contest between the Upper and Lower Burma Buddha [sic] Associations. The political victory was won by the pro-Government Lower Burma faction. Among the ten guidance precepts agreed upon for observance by all monks were the realization of Burma's New Order, the expulsion of the enemies of Burma and Nippon, and the fostering of friendly relations with Japan. The Government apparently agreed to acknowledge the religious authority of the *Maha Sangha* while the latter would lend its prayers and blessings to Burma's "independence" and the Greater East Asia war. But the Government's group did not get complete control; religiously, the conservative party won. Their influence is seen in the action of the *Sayadawgyis* (ruling teachers) in prohibiting a younger group of *pongyis* from entering medical school

because the act was allegedly incompatible with their religious code; while at the same time these officials remained indifferent to various flagrantly sinful acts of other monks in their own group. The Government felt obliged to accept the ruling of the religious authorities in this matter.

Ba Maw's official policy as Adipadi has been to pay high reverence to Buddhism in general and to regard the head *Sayadaw* at Rangoon as qualified to speak for all the monks of Burma. Soon after his elevation to Chief of State he made a ceremonial visit to the Shwedagon Pagoda, where he was received by his Ministers, the Privy Council, Pagoda trustees, and leaders of the Buddhist Associations, all to the accompaniment of royal music. After offering prayers, he paid his respects to the All-Burmese Supreme Council *Sanghas*, and presented to them an offering of Rs. 150,000 in the manner of the Burmese kings. The priests responded with prayer for the world. In September 1943, through the Religious Department of the Government he announced the revival of comprehensive *Vineya* (Pali scripture) examinations for priests at seven different levels of competence for thirty-one of the Buddhist districts of Burma. Many of the examinations were duly held. This action constituted a substantial gesture on the part of a man of western training to the dignity and significance of the Buddhist educational standards prevailing in the times of the Burman kings.

But in spite of government encouragement, the Buddhist religion in Burma is clearly in decline. A newspaper report reveals that most of the monks have departed from religious centers such as Rangoon and Mandalay, probably because of bombings and lack of provision for their needs. The editor urged that the government take a census of all *pongys* in Burma with special concern for locating the most learned monks, and exhort the people to contribute to their essential needs and to collect *Pali* scripture libraries for serious study. The Dobama-Sinyetha party group is trying hard to persuade the monks to engage in preaching tours in behalf of government ends, such as the suppression of crime, friendship with Japan, economy of personal expenditures, national progress, and the New Order in East Asia. But the government is not interested in promoting religion as such, especially of an unprogressive type which advocates a head-in-the-sand isolationist devotion to a strictly Burmese order of things. A genuine rapprochement between the government and conservative Buddhists is probably impossible.

The policy of the Japanese with reference to Buddhism in Burma has followed their original propagandist emphasis of the common religious tie between the two states, and has been integrated with a broader cultural program. Both Burmese and Japanese authorities have been very sensitive to Allied claims that Shinto was being propagated in Burma. Shinto emphasis has in fact been confined to the building of a national shrine located on one of the slopes of the Shwedagon pagoda platform and dedicated to the spirits of Burma's heroic dead.

The Japanese have not interfered with the Burmese Government's handling of the *pongys*. One specific project has been undertaken to acclimatize Burman Hinayana (Southern) Buddhism to alien Japanese soil. It is to build in Japan an exact replica of the destroyed Botataung pagoda, formerly located in the lower wharf district of Rangoon. The Burmese Buddhists appear to have been genuinely flattered by this gesture, and, with the approval of the *Maha Sangha*, various *Sayadaws* (abbots) contributed relics to be enshrined in the new structure. This project seems to be the basis of Japanese claims that a portion of the genuine ashes of the Buddha has been transferred from Burma to Japan. But it is inconceivable that the jealous Buddhists of Burma would part with anything so sacred as Buddha's ashes.

B. THE INDIAN INDEPENDENCE LEAGUE AND ARMY

The second group in Burma toward which the Japanese have developed a special policy is the estimated half million Indians that were left behind after the campaign of 1942. Japanese sponsoring of the Indian Independence League was designed to stimulate a concerted demand both outside and within India for freedom for India from British rule, and to create the appearance of solidarity on this question among all the peoples of Eastern Asia. The League's program has followed much the same pattern in all the occupied countries of the Southern regions. But peculiar complications in Burma developed from its closeness to India and the opposition of the Burmese population to the presence of the Indians on their soil.

The exaggerated concern which the Japanese showed for the welfare of the Indian residents of Burma contrasted sharply with the treatment the latter received from the Burmese. Burma's Indians remembered two savage racial clashes, and half of them at the time of the invasion preferred to brave the deadly overland route to their homeland rather than to face the perils of unrestrained Burmese violence. Everywhere Indians were intimidated and abused. Shopkeepers lost their goods and ceased doing business. Laborers in the delta suffered a veritable pogrom.

Relief came from the Japanese. They halted the attacks on Indians and forestalled similar developments in Upper Burma. They drew floating coolie labor to Rangoon and gave it employment. Cooperating Indians, although British subjects, were not considered as enemy nationals. Some Anglo-Indians captured in the act of escaping from Burma were put in concentration camps but a considerable number eventually got back their old jobs on the railways and in the communication services. Indian landowners were eventually given opportunity to prove their claims. An Indian Resident's Association was set up under the direct supervision of the Japanese Army to control the assets of non-resident Indians. The military authorities did not flout Burman nationalist sentiment by insisting that Indians be taken into Government employ. The Japanese also acquiesced in the Burman ruling of 16 October 1942 forbidding the entry of additional Indians into Burma.

The Indian Independence League was organized under Japanese guidance not in Burma, but at Bangkok, Thailand, on 15 June 1942. Rash Behari Bose, an Indian nationalist long resident in Japan, assumed the presidency of the representative Council of the League. The first meeting of the Rangoon chapter was held on 10 August 1942. For the Indians in Burma the League functioned actually as a protective and relief association. For the Japanese, it was primarily a cloak for their efforts to enlist Indian prisoners of war for purposes of espionage, sabotage, and propaganda within India and especially among the British-Indian forces. All who would agree to fight with Japan for the independence of India were promised release from prison and Rs. 5 per month. Tokyo advertised on 17 October 1942 that 400 Indian prisoners of war had accepted the offer. The activities of the League in Burma dropped completely out of the news during the winter and spring of 1942-43, probably to avoid ruffling the feelings of Burmese nationalists who would resent any aggressive Indian move.

Serious agitation in Burma of the Indian Independence program began during June 1943 at the celebration of the first anniversary of the founding of the League. A mass meeting under Indian chairmanship listened to fiery speeches advocating freedom for India. Dr. Thein Maung, representing the Burman government, expressed the hope that the celebration of 1944 would be held in New Delhi. His words carried the implication that Burmans did not relish getting involved in the League's affairs. Similar rallies were staged in Thailand and Malaya. Tojo's speech before the Japanese

Diet on 17 June referring to prospective independence for Burma and the Philippines was designed for the ears of India's four hundred million people who, he said, were awaiting Japanese aid. The program was a build-up for the dramatic appearance in Tokyo during the third week of June of the Bengali revolutionary, Subhas Chandra Bose.

The transference of Subhas Chandra Bose from Berlin to Tokyo was a major development in Axis propaganda strategy. He took over the leadership of the Indian Independence League from Rash Behari Bose (no kin), and transferred the propagandist emphasis from civil disobedience within India to militant attack on British rule from both within and outside India. He established his headquarters among the fanatically anti-British Indian population at Singapore, where the Japanese had set up their main school for training fifth columnists. He was also sure to arouse a considerable response among revolutionaries within India, and especially in famine-threatened Bengal. His influence would also increase the effectiveness of the Japanese Inspired Fifth-Columnists (JIFCs) entering India who already had begun to occasion British Indian authorities considerable uneasiness.

Since Burma was the only Japanese-occupied territory contiguous to India, Bose had to make it his operational base. Because of the anti-Indian sentiments of the Burmese, his preparations required more than six months. Ba Maw's consent was probably given at the time of his visit to Singapore in mid-July 1943, when he conferred with both Tojo and Bose. The conversations were resumed when Bose visited Rangoon on 29 July and again on 24 September, on the occasions of Burma's declaration of independence and its formal celebration.

As a result of Bose's first visit the Indian Independence League in Burma recovered somewhat from its ineffectiveness and timidity. Burma's independence set an example for India and Bose's high standing in GEA circles gave his followers greater confidence. Tangible results were not long in coming. On 21 August the Burma Government accepted Tokyo's ruling that Indians, although British subjects, would not be considered enemy aliens. They could even become eligible for Burman citizenship "under a naturalization law to be enacted in the near future." Indian residents in nations friendly to Burma would thereafter be permitted to enter, pass through, and reside in Burma, thus reversing the exclusion rule of October 1942.

The need for additional Indian labor may have influenced the latter action. Tokyo cited the new regulations as a sacrificial contribution by Burma to the cause of GEA and the Burma chairman of the Independence League hailed the decision as being constructive.

On his second visit to Rangoon in September 1943, Bose made a deliberate effort to enlist Muslim support by a ceremonious visit to the Burma tomb of Bahadur Shah, the last of the Mogul emperors. On this occasion he appeared in a military uniform and reviewed a unit of the "Indian National Army" probably the JIFC group at Mingaladon. A few of Rangoon's hard-pressed middle-class Indians, already objects of relief by the League, may have started taking military drill, but the Indian force could not have amounted to much. The Burmese were gradually being conditioned to having Indian military units on their own soil.

Bose did not transfer his Free India Government headquarters to Burma until 7 January 1944; shortly thereafter he took over the care of the Burma government's Absentee Indians' Property Department set up in 1942. Only a few battalions of the Indian National Army have ever been reported in Burma. They have been used by the Japanese to encourage desertions and to foment sabotage. None have been associated

with the Burma Army in any way. The Burma Government does not in fact acknowledge any obligation to participate in Bose's projected invasion of India. Burma is the temporary host of the Indian Government and Army, but would like to be rid of her guests as soon as possible. Both Indian civilians and soldiers within Burma are regarded as unwelcome by the Burmese and as not fully trustworthy by the Japanese.

C. THE POSITION OF THE KARENS

The strong Karen community in Lower Burma did not willingly submit to Ba Maw's regime. Acrimonious relations with the Burmese throughout the Irrawaddy delta continued until May or June of 1943. The friction centered at Bassein, where the Karens, probably on good grounds, were suspected of being loyal to the British. Meanwhile the recognized national leader of the Karens, Sir San C. Po of Bassein, decided that the acceptance of Japanese control was the only means of assuring protection for his people. He therefore began urging his followers to quit giving aid to British soldiers and agents. He became a member of the Independence Preparatory Committee in May 1943 and joined the Privy Council in the following August. Ba Maw thereupon pledged non-discrimination against Karens in all matters of governmental policy and received in return a pledge from the Karen Central Council to support the war.

But the Karens as a whole did not actively cooperate. During the summer of 1943, the Japanese authorities searched suspected Karen premises in Bassein and confiscated all private radio sets. When, in September, the Japanese apprehended two British soldiers whom the Karens had concealed for eighteen months, a new crisis arose. The assisting Karens, when arrested, made matters worse by declaring that they had acted on orders from their national leaders. The authorities took full advantage of the situation to bring the Karens in line. Japanese and Burmese members of the Labor Bureau informed representative Karen leaders assembled on 8 October that every resident of Burma must accept responsibility in the Letyon Tat (Labor Service Corps); and that the individuals present must tour the districts of Henzada, Maublin, Myaungmya, Pyapon, and Bassein to organize Karen units for the Corps. The Burmese spokesmen explained that the required cooperation had already been secured from the Indian people. A few days later Japanese military officers forced the three outstanding Karen leaders, Dr. San C. Po, his son C. C. Po, and Saw Shwe Tun Kya of Myaungmya, to issue a signed circular dated 14 October warning that if the Karen community did not cooperate with their friends, the Japanese, in ferreting out enemy agents, the offending villages would be wiped out, guilty and innocent alike. The Karen leaders urged full acquiescence in the Japanese demands since there was no feasible alternative.

Karen opposition to the Japanese is probably considerably less virulent than their ineradicable hatred of the Burmese. It is significant that Karens have provided fully half of the enlistment for the so-called *Heiho Tat*, or service battalions, of the Japanese army. They have borne a heavy burden of forced labor and most of them doubtless hope for Allied rescue soon. The Pwo Karens have been more thoroughly Burmanized than have the Sgaw, and probably share a measure of the Burmese enthusiasm for independence.

D. THE SHANS, CHINESE, AND KACHINS

The Shan peoples of northern Burma appear to be both anti-British and anti-Chinese. Such sentiments have been strengthened by extensive Allied employment of Gurkha and Kachin forces in north Burma. In the Shan States proper, popular attitudes have been affected by increasing economic distress and by the officious interference

of Burmese administrators in opposition to the authority of the *Sawbwas* (local princes).

The Chinese resident in Burma have apparently kept their political opinions to themselves and have stayed out of harm's way as far as possible. Their relations with the Burmese have continued to be fairly satisfactory in spite of the fact that they seem to have given no positive support to the war. The Japanese-sponsored Burma branch of the Overseas Chinese Association apparently aroused little if any response from local Chinese. A Military Publicity Corps recruited by the Nanking authorities in China came to Burma in February 1944 for the avowed purpose of promoting more genuine support of Japan's ends by the local Chinese community. As a result of the increased pressure, Burma's Chinese business men contributed 200,000 rupees for the purchase of Japanese planes, and Chinese farmers subscribed half that sum a few weeks later. The President of the United Chinese Associations explained that it was only natural for the Chinese to help at a time when they were "enjoying normal business while thousands of Japanese, Indian and Burmese soldiers are shedding blood" not far away.

The Kachins of Myitkyina district have had a hard time. They dislike the Chinese almost as much as they despise their Burmese and Shan neighbors, and the Japanese at once put them under very heavy pressure. Communities were required to furnish the Japanese with approximately one laborer per household under threat of severe reprisals. Village chiefs were carefully selected and made personally accountable for controlling their people. As a result most of the Kachins fled to the jungle. Many of them have since given military support to the Allies. By contrast, the population of the Chin Hills was much more thoroughly intimidated by the Japanese and has cooperated with Allied forces to a limited degree only.

VII. BURMAN PARTICIPATION IN THE WAR EFFORT

A. VOLUNTARY AGENCIES AND ASSOCIATIONS

All voluntary war service agencies designed to aid in mobilizing civilian activities for general welfare and defense were placed under the arbitrary control of Ba Maw as "Anashin" (Dictator) in September 1943. A special Leadership Army or Guidance Corps headed by prominent members of the official Dobama-Sinyetha party group is empowered to act for him. They are responsible for championing official governmental policy and perfecting popular collaboration with it. All recognized civilian agencies are included in what is called the Circle Army or Corps of Wheels.

There are approximately a score of such units in all. The most important agency is the *Myanma Wunthan Aphwe* or National Service Association. It has blanket charge of the promotion of relief work, air raid precautions, fire-fighting, sanitary measures, prevention of crime, and numerous social service functions. It has conducted a series of three-months training classes open to those who subscribed to the *Dobama-Sinyetha* creed of "One Blood, One Voice, One Order."

The East Asia Youth's League is only slightly less important. It maintains many branches throughout the country and has sponsored numerous activities. The League has spied on subversive elements, arrested law breakers, and lectured to youth against crime. It has given elementary instruction in sanitation, organized volunteer schools for younger children, and enlisted laborers for the harvesting of paddy. In more direct support of the war effort, Youth League members have solicited subscriptions for loans and civilian defense funds, gone without meals in order that the Burma Army might eat, and advocated united support of independence efforts. A specially indoctrinated semi-militarized branch of the Youth League took the name *Kaybodaing*, or Civil Defense Service Corps. Members are pledged to put the interests of the country before their personal safety and to demonstrate always an aggressive self-sacrificing spirit. The Corps acts as a vigilante group to enforce governmental regulations in close cooperation with the police. In very large measure it has been the younger generation, rather than the elder, that has worked to consolidate the new regime.

The women contribute to the Circle Army through the Women's Patriotic League and the National Girls' Association. These deal with nursing service, first aid, soldiers' assistance work, and general propaganda. Madame Ba Maw and other politically prominent women have taken the lead. On the local level there are village defense units and counter-espionage agencies, which are often Japanese inspired. Minor organizations devoted to literary, cultural, educational, religious, and relief purposes have burgeoned. Although the net result in most cases may have been only an increase of busy work, the varied activities have provided an outlet for the energies of all who felt an urge to do something about Burma's independence and who were denied political or military participation. The organizations have contributed to social integration and provided positive alternatives to unsocial inclinations.

B. FORCED LABOR BATTALIONS: LETYON TAT

On the basis of Japan's promise of independence, made in January 1943, the Burmese Government, as pointed out earlier, shifted its appeal for labor service to a patriotic basis. Those not permitted to shed their blood for Burma's freedom, the appeals emphasized, ought to be willing to sweat for it. In this way they could show their gratitude for Japan's generous assistance to the nation. The Burma Reconstruction National Labor Service Corps was promptly dubbed the "Sweat Army," or *Letyon*

Tat. The Government promised to provide food and housing accommodations for all volunteers, and even suggested that they might take their families with them. At the same time the Japanese military still exercised the power to require forced labor on a local and short term basis.

The first contingent of the Reconstruction Army enlisted for probably three months, was sent to Thanbyuzayat on the Thailand border below Moulmein to work on the new railway. The workers' term of service ran out in late May 1943. A new group was recruited on the plea that Burman cooperation would end the war quickly and ensure their goal of independence. A Central Labor Service Bureau, headed by Thakin Ba Sein and including six Japanese officials, was established to care more adequately for the needs of the Sweat Army. Its principal branch office was at Thanbyuzayat. Ba Sein promised to provide medical care, free postal service, and Burmese-prepared rice and curry, but revealed the dissatisfaction among the workers by adding that he "hoped that there will be no further complaints and grievances." He denounced as enemies of the people persons of lazy habits and trouble makers who deserted at the earliest opportunity. An auxiliary *Chein Aik* or "spare time" Corps tried to absorb the leisure of the numerous idle. But no amount of propaganda could add glamor to labor service. The response was far from satisfactory and a complete overhauling of the system was due.

On 22 August 1943, the government announced a drastic reorganization of the Labor Service Corps on a nation-wide basis. To make the proposal less repulsive recruits were to be assigned to regions where the climate resembled that of their homes. The government was to compensate six months of service in the Corps with letters of appreciation, a grant of land, and a present in cash or goods. It offered also to provide the same care for injuries suffered in connection with labor service as was given to military casualties. A National Service Deliberative Council and a Central Service Advisory Board were set up in September, under a Burmese chairman, to absorb all previous Service Corps boards and committees.

The new "front-line" labor policy was accompanied by vigorous newspaper pleas that the nation become war-minded. If the people could bring themselves to "eat, sleep, come and go in terms of war," recruits for the Burma Army and the *Letyon Tat* would no longer be scarce. Burmans were told they must be willing to defend their hard-won freedom by joining the service corps. 22 September 1943 was proclaimed as National Service Day. The full week of formal celebration of Burma's independence, which began on 25 September, was timed to bring the agitation to a climax. The threat of forced labor service was a factor in stimulating enlistment in the Burma Army, as will appear below.

The actual forced-labor program was started in October. Karens and Indians were first brought into line. Conscription of Burmese began during the last week of October. Specially assigned Thakin party leaders and Japanese recruiting officers took the initiative. Quotas were set for each community and village headmen were responsible for producing the required number of men, distributed theoretically so as not to hinder agricultural work. A twelve day effort in Maubin district ending on 5 November produced 700 "recruits," a considerable number of whom were the sons of headmen. The campaign in Pegu district was opened about the same time, with a Nippon officer present.

The workers received one rupee per day plus rice and salt, and a uniform consisting of green trousers, a shirt, and canvas shoes. Overseer interpreters who could speak English got Rs.150 per month. The men lived and worked under Japanese guard and were shot at if they attempted to escape. Poor food and the lack of recreational facilities

were chronic complaints; the service was highly unpopular. So many substitutes (at Rs.100) made deserting a profession, and had so many amateur imitators, that headmen were made liable to arrest if they did not report deserters. Nevertheless, the recruitment of Karens from the delta area was particularly heavy; and the program was gradually extended to all parts of Burma.

In addition to their work on the Thailand railway, the *Letyon Tat* battalions were used widely for road construction and the preparation of air fields. For the latter purpose the regular Labor Corps was usually supplemented by local forced levies. A special group was recruited for service at Rangoon in December 1943, where two new camps were set up to house them. In theaters of military operations the Japanese exacted labor from villages under threats of severe punishment to the headmen by the dread Military Police. It was easier to levy these additional workers than to try to recover deserters from the labor battalions.

The first five *Letyon Tats* were recruited from March to October 1943; and next four were called up from November to January 1944. More than 350 numbered labor battalions of unknown size have been referred to in the press. Patriotism within the several battalions has been strong enough to elicit from meager wages periodic contributions ranging from 1000 to 4000 rupees, for the support of the Burma Army. The Japanese radio boasted on 19 March 1944 that "Burma has been supplying a larger amount of labor service than any other one of the Southern Regions in close concert with the Japanese forces."

C. THE BURMA ARMY

It will be recalled that after Japan's summary disbanding of the Burma Independence Army in the summer of 1942, martial enthusiasm among Burmans suffered a sudden collapse. The three battalions of the so-called "Defense Army" which survived the dismissal were under theoretical Burman control, but the commands were given in Japanese, the discipline was strict, the hours long, the pay poor. No amount of cajolery could persuade the youth to reenlist. Colonel Aung San paraded his "rump" Defense Army at frequent intervals; government leaders extolled the glories of the soldier's life; the Japanese alleged that Burma was not fit for independence if the people would not help prevent the British from returning. But it was all to no avail. The magic word "independence" had disappeared from the army's title and the Burmans obviously regarded the force as an alien thing.

The Japanese did not abandon their endeavor to recruit a native army in Burma, an integral part of their effort to give vitality to the concept of Greater East Asia. Their progress was slow but methodical. They started the training of 300 young officer cadets. When the first group was graduated on 31 March 1943, thirty of the number were selected for additional training in Japan. During the spring a Youth's Military Corps for boys of fourteen to sixteen years also got under way.

In May 1943 the Japanese initiated what they called the *Heiho Tat*, a labor service branch of their own army for which adventurous Burmans would volunteer for three-year service. The first two hundred candidates were examined on 9 May; and two Japanese recruiting parties toured Lower Burma from 15 May to 9 June on itineraries which assigned an average of two days to each locality. The provisioning and pay for Burmans were the same as for the Japanese forces, running from Rs.60 to Rs.140 a month for family men living out of barracks to Rs.10 to Rs.45 for barrack troops. This volunteer *Heiho* force numbered eventually some 6000 in all. About half of them were

Karens. They performed onerous duties connected with supply services, and were also scattered among regular Japanese field troops at the approximate ratio of one to twenty-four.

Promoters of the Burma Army proper bestirred themselves in June and July 1943 to meet this Japanese competition. The recruiting appeal was renewed all over the country. Patriotic organizations toured districts adjacent to Rangoon to collect volunteers. The results were still very meager. At the end of July, the Rangoon radio was still complaining of the lack of public response. When Japan turned over the command to the newly organized Burma Government on 1 August 1943, the Defense Army numbered not more than a few thousand of ill-equipped and disgruntled men.

A major difficulty for the Burma Army was the inability of the government to provide it with food, clothing, boats, and myriad other necessities. The announced official blue uniform with open-collared blouse set off by a peacock emblem and Japanese-style cap was in sharp contrast to the tattered uniforms actually available. The Military Preparations Department advertised in July for the services of qualified shoemakers and tailors to outfit the Army, and later asked for persons who knew how to make soap. Funds did not always exist for paying the Burma Army and a private's pay even then was below that of the *Heiho Tat*. Popular reference to the competing Heiho Tat as the "*Hin Oh Tat*," a phrase adopted from a Burmese expression meaning "about to go into the curry pot," reflected nationalist jealousy of the too-successful Japanese endeavor at recruiting, as compared with the gathering of their own army.

For a number of weeks after the Burma Government took over full control of the Defense Army on 1 August 1943, enlisting agencies continued to encounter discouraging response to their appeal for volunteers. Conscription was never contemplated. To avoid the popular objection to the word "Defense" in the Army's title the Supreme National Defense Council on 15 September formally adopted the name "*Burma National Army*" instead. One paper preferred the simpler term "*Burma Army*." Tacit admission of the impossibility of enlisting disgruntled elements of the old Burma Independence Army, as well as a desire to conciliate them, can be seen in the officially published advertisement that 4000 clerical appointments were being reserved for Burma's ex-soldiers.

Jealousy of the new Commander-in-Chief who succeeded General Aung San, now Defense Minister, was another factor in the Army's discontent. A dinner party for the malcontent army leaders was staged at Government House in early September at which the principal speaker praised the new leader as one who could ably serve the country. He added, "Now is not the time for personal recriminations and divisions. It is the time to work together in unity to reach the necessary goal." A government spokesman at the dinner admitted that the army was suffering hardship along with the rest of the country, but promised to do everything possible to meet its essential requirements. Subsequently the girl's division of the Asia Youth League advertised that they would "stitch the torn clothes of the members of the Burma Defense Army who, although paid only Rs.7 each month, have noble hearts."

The Government's approach was sometimes in harsher vein, as the following declaration of a recruiting officer illustrates:

"The Burmese Army does not want those who have to be forcibly enlisted and those who enrolled themselves for pay and position . . . , only those who will sacrifice their lives in defense of the country . . . Those who have to be rounded up by the police to attend meetings are cowards . . .

Anybody who serves in the Army must be able to undergo poverty, must dare to murder, and must have courage to die."

The tide of low enlistment eventually turned. Towns in Lower Burma organized elaborate parades for volunteers, winding up at mass meetings in the cinema where the district and township officers acted as chairmen and masters of ceremonies. The ladies threw flowers; the town elders furnished cheroots; and someone fed the heroes with chicken palau. By mid-October 1943 the force was growing steadily. This increase was probably stimulated by threat of forced labor. The second class of reserve officer cadets also graduated in October and applications were solicited for one hundred military cadetships of two years duration for youth under sixteen years, offering clothes, rations and Rs.10 per month pocket money. An Army Ordinance dated 16 November improved the ranks and pay of the Army presumably to Rs.10 minimum per month.

By early December, more recruits were available for the Army than could be cared for. The force was meagerly equipped for fighting, but was nevertheless capable of performing guide and patrol work, garrison duty, and the protection of lines of communication. It was clearly an auxiliary body. Shans were present in fairly large numbers while Karens were few. The latter obviously preferred the Heiho battalions to the Burma Army. The new Officers Training Class for January 1944 was thrown open on a competitive basis to enlisted men already in the army. Something less than all-out popular support of the army is nevertheless suggested in Aung San's plea of 4 January: "All forces are your forces . . . ; (they) are not for the purpose of ill-treating you, but for your protection. Enlarge our forces; encourage them. Rise all Burmans and defend our own soil."

D. BURMAN PARTICIPATION IN THE CAMPAIGN OF 1944

The function of the Burma Army during the first six months of the 1944 campaign was primarily to protect Japanese lines of communication and to assist the supply services for active theaters of operation. It did very little actual fighting. In Northern Burma and to a less degree in the Upper Chindwin Burman troops accompanied the Japanese on patrol activities. They manned anti-aircraft defenses in certain areas, and patrolled certain sections of the Arakan coast. Burman troops took no immediate part in the Japanese attempts to invade India, and were apparently not brought into contact with the several battalions of Bose's Indian Army associated with that effort. Apparently the Burma Army engaged in some fighting along the railway to Myitkina against the airborne Chindit bands, where they displayed creditable marksmanship but lacked staying power.

The degree of popular enthusiasm for the Burma Army is reflected in voluntary contributions for its support. The appeal has been organized since September 1943 on a monthly basis. Contributions came from business firms, individuals, schools, party groups, social organizations, and from the hard-won earnings of the *Letyon Tat*. The collections for January 1944 were over 28,000 rupees, more than in any previous month, but far less than is needed for the expenses involved. Youthful champions of the army are far from satisfied with the response of their well-to-do elders whom they accuse of concentration on promoting their own private interests and not sacrificing for the new Burma, a significant evidence of cleavage between age groups.

Relations between the Burma Army and the Japanese command have not been friendly. One report says that quarrels of such violent nature have occurred that deaths resulted. The Burman forces are only partially equipped, but they resent any implica-

tion that they are inferior as soldiers to the Japanese. If the Burma Army is anti-Japanese in its spirit, as alleged, it is none the less intensely anti-British, and will oppose bitterly the return of British and Indian troops. Hostility to the British constitutes the essential basis of cooperation between the two forces.

Leaders of the Burma Government have staked both their personal and their nation's future on a Japanese victory. But most Burmans probably believe that the Burma Army single-handedly could defend their national existence, and therefore want the Japanese to leave. Upper Burma has never been friendly to the invaders. The Government is continually obliged to emphasize Burma's debt to Japan. Further agricultural regimentation will intensify popular opposition. The difference is one of method rather than of goal. No evidence exists that the politically-conscious Burmese have discounted in the least their desire for independence or will ever acquiesce in a return to their pre-war colonial status.

E. CURRENT TRENDS IN ADMINISTRATION

A number of able Burmans in the Government are working hard to improve the administration and thus establish their country's capacity for self-rule. They can depend on the support of organized elements of Burman society and popular enthusiasm for independence. Improvements in education, police, courts, and general efficiency have been realized. In January 1944, a "dearness" allowance (approximately 20 percent) was added to salaries of government employees and compensation was provided for injury or death sustained in line of duty. Civil Service examinations have been posted regularly since October 1943 for many departments of the government. The Civil Service Commission has endeavored to eliminate party control of the police by giving preference to candidates who "have not been too closely attached to any party or political leader."

Party leaders, (*Gaung, saung hmus*) have ceased their officious interference in the upper levels of the administration, and continue active only on the level of local affairs. Thirty-two municipalities have recently been promised a measure of local autonomy and the tendency generally within the Government is toward decentralization of control. If the present Burmese administration is allowed the opportunity, it will no doubt make a much stronger case for Burma's political competence than the country could ever make for its economic or military self-sufficiency.

VIII. APPENDIX: PERSONNEL

A. JAPANESE ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL IN BURMA

Ashida, Military officer enforcing price controls in Rangoon.
Hirayanagi, Makoto, Second Secretary in the Japanese Embassy.
Iida, General, Japanese Commander-in-Chief in Burma, 1942.
Ishida, Tsuyoshi, Deputy Japanese Adviser to the Central Bank of Burma.
Ismoura, Major General Takesuke, Military Attaché to the Embassy.
Ito, Miss Matsuko, teacher of Japanese to Ba Maw's daughters; also member of Army Press Section.
Kaboashi, Captain, Military Security officer who threatened the Karens.
Kitazawa, a Japanese Counselor.
Kawabe, General, Successor to Iida.
Minami, Colonel, Japanese Commander of the Burma Independence Army.
Miyamoto, Hideo, aide to Dr. Ogawa.
Miyazaki, T., Chief Administrator of Nipponese Military Office for Enemy Properties Department.
Nishimura, Takuma, Lieut. General, Governor of Shan States to December 1943.
Ogawa, Dr. Gotoro, Japanese Supreme Economic Adviser.
Ozeki, Shoken, aide to Dr. Ogawa.
Sakurai, Kyogaro, Adviser to General Iida's Military Administration; also wealthy manager of the Nippon Typewriter Company in Burma; now in Japan.
Sawada, Renzo, Japanese Ambassador and Political Adviser.
Shimazu, Consul General in Rangoon.
Shimooko, Chuichi, Chief Adviser to Burma Central Bank.
Shozo, Iwao, President of the Naval Education Department, Rangoon.
Tamatugiji, Lieut., Japanese Broadcaster in Rangoon.
Tamura, Masataro, Attaché to the Japanese Embassy in Burma.
Tatsumi, Miashi, Director of Internal Affairs Department of the Japanese Military Administration.
Tokano, Genshin, Chief of the Japanese Administrative Secretariat.

B. PARTIAL LIST OF BURMESE ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL

The Cabinet

Adipadi and Prime Minister, Dr. Ba Maw.
Deputy Prime Minister, Thakin Mya.
Minister of National Defense, Thakin Aung San.
Vice-Minister, U Aung Than.
Minister of Cooperation and Miscellaneous Affairs, U Tun Aung,
(Also chairman of political section of the Committee for Collaboration.)
Minister of Religion, Welfare and Publicity, Bandolla U Sein.
Director of Propaganda, U Tun Shein.
Minister of Taxation, U Aye.
Undersecretary, U Ba Tu.

Foreign Minister, Thakin Nu.
Undersecretary, U Shwe Ba.
Minister of Justice, U Thein Maung.
Minister of Agriculture and Lands, Thakin Lun Baw.
Minister of Commerce, Industry (includes mines), and Handicraft, U Mya of Yamethin.
Secretary, U Nyun.
Minister of Supply, Thakin Than Tun.
(Also chairman of economic section of Collaboration Committee.)
Secretary, U Tin.
Director of Transport Bureau, U Hla Pe.
Director Commodity Bureau, U Ko Ko.
Director Paddy Purchase Bureau, U Thein.
Minister of Communication and Irrigation, U Lay (?) Maung.
Minister of Interior, U Ba Win (Also Governor of Shan States)
Director Burma Prison Branch, U Ba Thein.
Inspector-General of Police, U Ohn Gyaw.
Minister of Education and Health, U Hla Min.
Director of Education, U Cho.
Minister of Forestry, Public Works and Reconstruction, U Hla Pe.

Officers of the Privy Council

President, Sir U Thwin.
Vice-President, U Ba Hlaing.
Secretary, U Tun Tin.
Deputy Secretary, U Sein.

Civil Service Commission

Director, U Ba Maung Chein.
Secretary, U Lwin.

National Service Department

Director, U Ba Lwin.

High Court

Chief Justice, Sir Mya Bu.
Justices: Sir J. A. Maung Gyi.
U Myint.
Registrar: U Thaung Sein.

Regional Directors

Upper Burma, Mandalay
Governor, U Po Sa.
State Chief of Police, U Maung Gale.
Middle Burma, Bassein.
Governor U Saw Hla Pru.
State Chief of Police, U Ohn Chein.
Lower Burma, Rangoon.
Governor U Hla Pe.
State Chief of Police, U Ba Maung.

Shan States, Taunggyi.

Governor, U Ba Win (Also Home Minister).

State Chief of Police, U Ba Maung.

Burma Central Bank

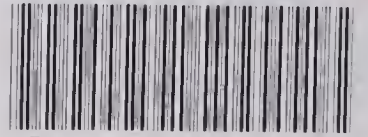
Governor, U Ba Maung.

Manager, U Chit Tun.

Burma's Ambassador to Tokyo

Dr. Thein Maung.

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